ブラッドベリSF傑作選

# ウは宇宙船のウ

原作/レイ・ブラッドベリ
漫画/萩尾　望都

集英社漫画文庫

## ★作者紹介★

**萩尾　望都**

昭和24年5月12日生まれ。福岡県出身。手塚治虫氏の「新撰組」に感動したことがデビューのきっかけとなった。代表作は「ポーの一族」「11人いる！」など多数。表題作のブラッドベリ傑作選「ウは宇宙船のウ」は、昭和53年週刊マーガレット14号に掲載されたものである。

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R・ブラッドベリ

集英社漫画文庫

Shueisha Manga Bunko

# R is for Rocket

A Selection of Bradbury's SF short-stories

Original Story: Ray Bradbury

Artist: Hagio Moto

集英社漫画文庫

# R is for Rocket
## =A Selection of Bradbury's SF short-stories=
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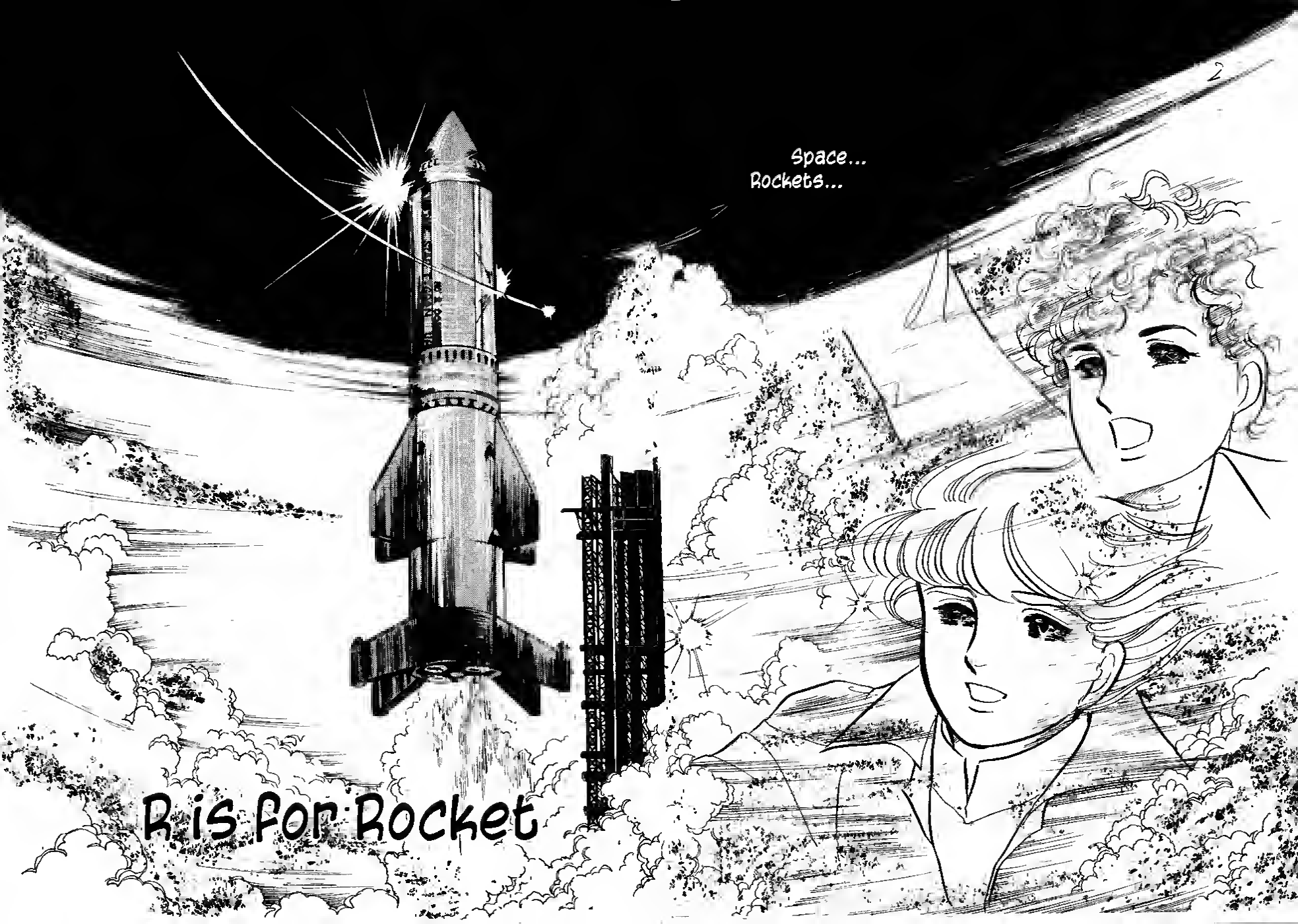
from "THE LAKE", "JACK IN THE BOX", "HOME COMING", "R IS FOR ROCKET", "THE ROCKET MAN", "THE FOG HORN", "THE SCREAMING WOMAN" and "COME INTO MY CELLAR" by Ray Bradbury
Japanese comic book rights arranged through Harold Matson Co inc, New York and Tuttle Mori Agency inc Tokyo

Rocket Port
Restricted Entry
Hurry up!
Look!
That one's supposed to go all the way to the moon!
For us boys, there was this fence,
C'mon! Fly up, up, and away until you escape gravity!
Where we pressed our faces and felt the wind turn warm,
Or where we came from,
And held to the fence and forgot who we were,
But dreamed of who we might be and where we might go...
Lord!
The very good lord...


Space...
Rockets...
R is for Rocket

Same here, Chris.
What wouldn't I give...
Gosh, what wouldn't I give to go with them.
who liked being boys,
Yet we were boys,
Man...
Today's was sure something, eh?
Who lived in a Florida town and liked the town...
I'd give my year's worth of monorail privileges.
Coming...
Let's go to the tele-show now.
Chris! Ralph!
Every Saturday morning, we'd gather here at the Rocket Port and gawk at the rockets...
We liked the rockets more.
But even so...
We climbed trees and played football and liked our mothers and fathers...
We went to school and fairly liked the school,

We thought on fire and stars and rockets.
Some time every hour of every day of every week for a minute or a second.
Rockets – which travelled out to the moon and beyond.
Those rockets were my one and only dream for as long as I could remember.
Rockets –
We wanted the stars for each of us, more than we would want a fistful of clear-cut blue-white diamonds.
And my friend Ralph,
For me,

If this keeps up I'll have you reclassified at the next psych-board meeting.
And you're usually the head of the class too...
Sorry, sir...
Good lord,
How do you explain yourself, Christopher?
Young man, you've flunked your semantics exam for both last week and this week.
If your grades keep on dropping, yes.
Do I really have to go to the hospital?
It's ...
Rockets
It's multi-tentacular. In brief, though —
It's conscious, sir... But it's not simple.
What sort of block have you got? It must be a very simple, and also a conscious one.
R is for Rocket, eh?

Since seeing that rocket with the XL3 motor last week...
Since when?
But I haven't been able to focus at all since then...
Chris, What did the teacher say?
He told me to focus on my studies since my grades have been dropping...
Yes, it's about C.M. Christopher...
I don't know...
You don't think you'll be sent away, do you, Chris?
They couldn't take you away then, right?
Blast the school,
Cheer up, Chris!
The teacher thinks all I need is a good psychiatric laundering...

KABLAM!
They can't take you away now. We're pals. It wouldn't be fair.
You're a good friend.
Ralph...
Ralph,
I got a war on.
A real good friend...
How many times has my mother said,
All by yourself?
I can't include you..
Because this is personal.
Two Million.
A Million?
"Don't eat so much, Chris, your eyes are bigger than your stomach!"

I got a war on, between a mind that wants things and a body that can't give it.
Change it to "Don't see so much, Chris, your mind is too big for your body."
Well, paraphrase it.
I see what you mean.
We go see rockets with the rest of the guys- Sid, Mac, Earl-
I knew you were.
I'm at that war, too.
They won't fight. They'll dodge, run away, and grow out of it. But I don't think we will.
We'll keep on waiting...

You can't apply for it. You wait.
Chris, the astronaut board selects.
...I know.
bo dl
And every month that passes you hope one morning a blue Astronaut helicopter will come down, out of the sky, land on your lawn,
USAOO
And that a neat-looking engineer will ease out, walk up the rampway briskly, and ring your house bell.
Until all those years go by...
You wait,
From the time you're old enough to turn cold in the stomach when you see a Moon Rocket,

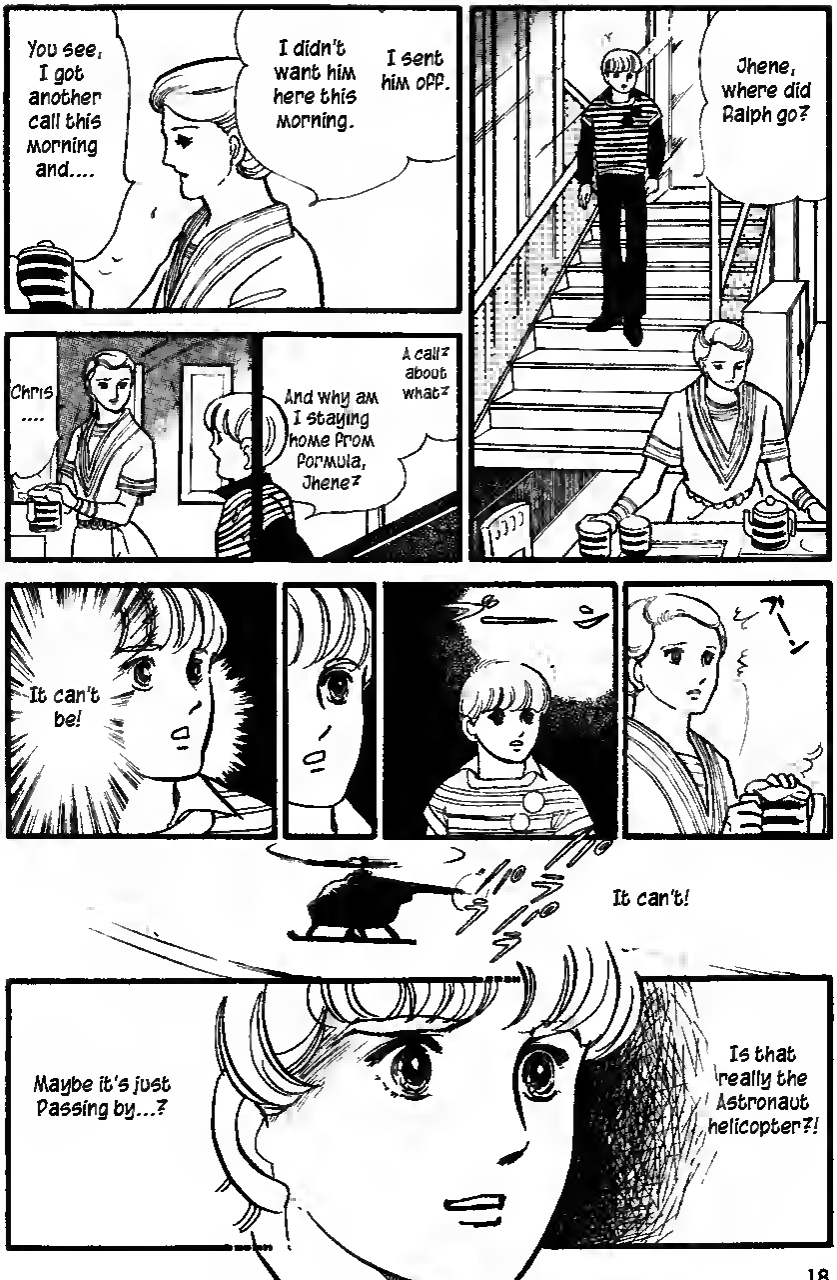
You drink and laugh a lot, and say what the heck...
You keep waiting for that helicopter until you're twenty-one...
And then, on the last day of your twentieth year,
That you really didn't care about it anyways.
I know.
I know.
But if I reach my twenty-first year without an astronaut ringing the bell where I live at the station, I...
I don't want that disappointment, Chris. I'm fifteen, just like you.
I've talked to men who waited, all for nothing.
And if it happens that way to us, Ralph we'll-

Ah, it's Jhene!
We'll get good and drunk together and find another job. Maybe loading cargo on a Europe bound freighter.
Ha.
I can't believe you call your mother by her name.
Hello, Jhene!
No, I'm fine.
What's wrong? You look ill.
Hello, Ma'am.
I'm back.
Oh hi, Ralph.

Poor Ralph Priory, having to live in one of those orthopedical stations because he doesn't have any parents...
Even if I don't have a father, I'm lucky to have my mother, at least.
Oh, c'mon.
No, I should get back to the station.
I'll take the rail and be back in an hour.
I have a few errands to take care of first, though.
You must be helping Ralph out with his homework again.
You can stay here tonight if you like, Ralph.
I can't say. I don't want to say until things happen.
I had two calls at work today.
Were those calls about me, Jhene?
One from your teacher and the other from...
He's a lively boy, isn't he?
But something happened between you two, didn't it?

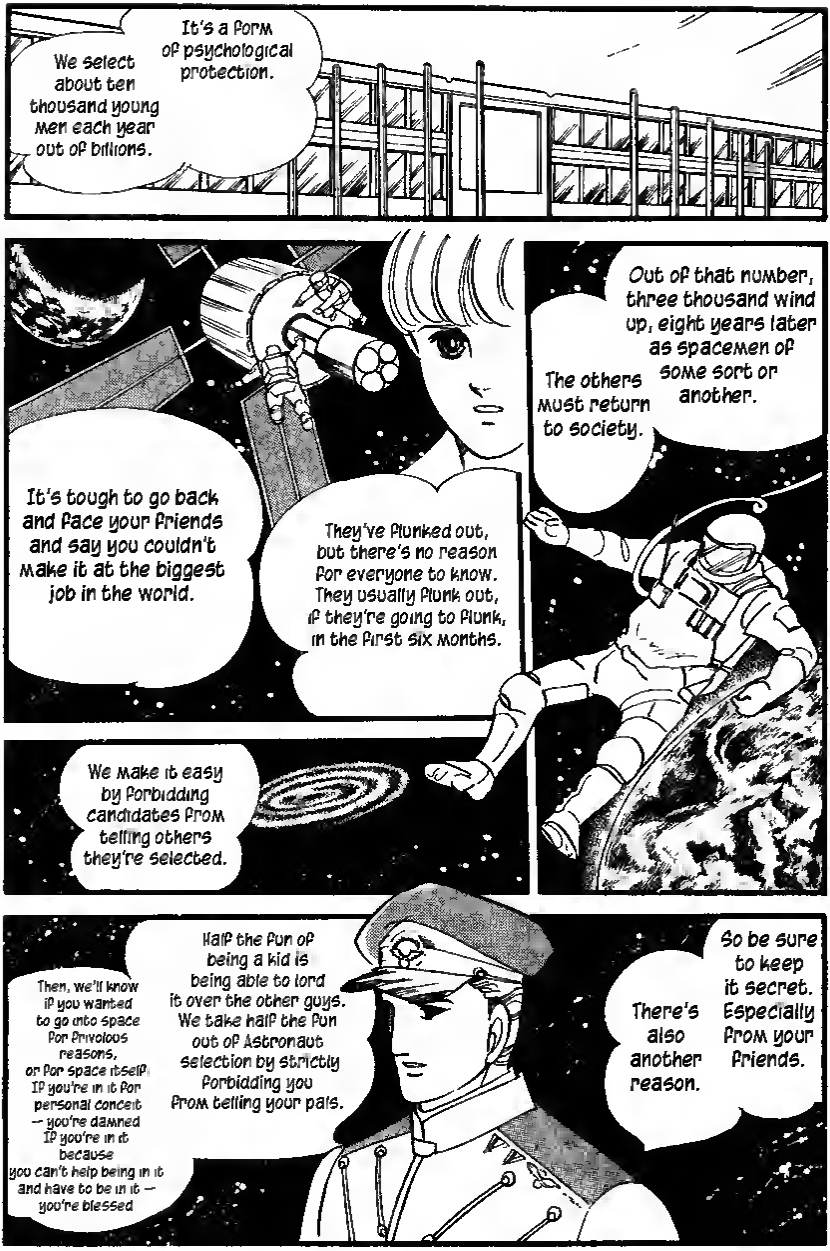
He worked in a chemistry lab,
Deep under ground most of the time, right?
Yeah, you told me, Jhene.
You never knew your father. I wish you had. You know who he was?
Christ,
So awfully young.
You're so young,
Jhene ...
And he never saw the stars.
Yes, he worked deep under the ground, Chris.
Oh, mother.

An errandz This early in the morningz
Your mother wanted me to run an errand for her See you at formula at 12 -Ralph-
When I woke the next morning there was a lot of sun light in the room.
But the cushion where Ralph slept was vacant
Ralphz
Be right down!
Hey! Chris! You'll be late for school!
No, Chris.
Sorry, gang. Go on without me!
I'll see you later!
Tell them to go on to formula without you today.


You see, I got another call this morning and....
I didn't want him here this morning.
I sent him off.
Jhene, where did Ralph go?
Chris ....
And why am I staying home from formula, Jhene?
A call? about what?
It can't be!
It can't!
Maybe it's just passing by...?
Is that really the Astronaut helicopter?!

There's no way it could actually be..
Morning, C.M. Christopher.
I'm from the astronaut board.
If only you could be here right now!
Why in the heck did you have to go away now with all this happening? Blast it, Ralph, why did you?!
Ralph!

チッチッチッチッ
High IQ. High perception.
Highest grades.
Yes, sir.
Enthusiasm necessary for the long, eight-year educational grind.
That is what was informed to us by your teacher during our discussion.
As such, you have been selected by the astronaut board.
Yes, sir.
Your mother and teacher know, naturally. But no other person must know.
No one?
One last thing. Nobody is to know you've been selected.
You're to report to the Rocket Station this Saturday afternoon at five. Any items you'll need will be fully provided by us.
Understand?
You want to know why, don't you? Allow me to explain.

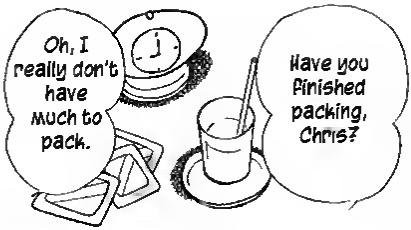

We select about ten thousand young men each year out of billions.
It's a form of psychological protection.
Out of that number, three thousand wind up, eight years later as spacemen of some sort or another.
The others must return to society.
It's tough to go back and face your friends and say you couldn't make it at the biggest job in the world.
They've flunked out, but there's no reason for everyone to know. They usually flunk out, if they're going to flunk, in the first six months.
We make it easy by forbidding candidates from telling others they're selected.
So be sure to keep it secret. Especially from your friends.
There's also another reason.
Half the fun of being a kid is being able to lord it over the other guys. We take half the fun out of astronaut selection by strictly forbidding you from telling your pals.
Then, we'll know if you wanted to go into space for frivolous reasons, or for space itself. If you're in it for personal conceit — you're damned If you're in it because you can't help being in it and have to be in it — you're blessed

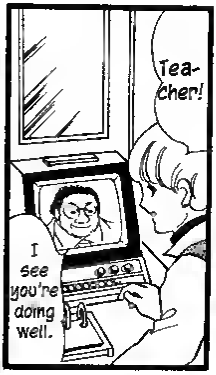
I can't tell you his ranking, of course, but he's on our list.
I have a friend. Ralph Priory. He lives at ortho-station-
Thank you, sir!
Station-bred you say? That's not good, but I'll check his record.
Sir, a ques-tion!
Pardon the intrusion, ma'am.
Then I'll be off.
Oh, Chris! Chris!

How wonder-ful!
Yes!
And I know I can do it!
I'll pass for sure!
I promise!
What about you, Jhene? Won't you be lonely?
Tell him that you're going away,
That's all.
Wait... How will I tell Ralph?
Jhene ....
Don't worry. I'll have Ralph.
I'll be taking him from the ortho-station to live with me while you're gone. That's what you wanted me to say, isn't it?

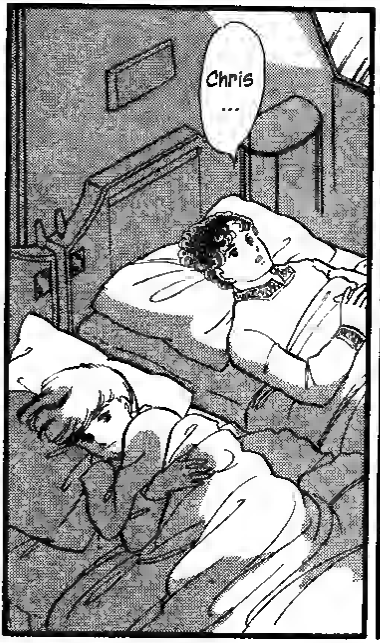
And so.
I'm sorry that he has to leave so soon this Saturday.
Chris'll be studying there for a year. Maybe more.
Chris will be temporarily studying abroad in Europe.
And I'd like to have you live here with me until he gets back.
Ma'am...
Yes, Ralph. We did have a lot of fun together.
But Ralph didn't even ask any more about why I was going or how long I would be away..
And we'll have to continue fighting our personal wars alone.
It was funny.
And Chris?
We had a lot of fun, didn't we?
I couldn't be more grateful.

You'll now be on your way to the most prestigious career in this world, Chris. Soon, you'll belong to the whole of humankind. Make sure to always do your best, got it?


Oh, I really don't have much to pack.
Have you finished packing, Chris?


Tea-cher!
I see you're doing well.

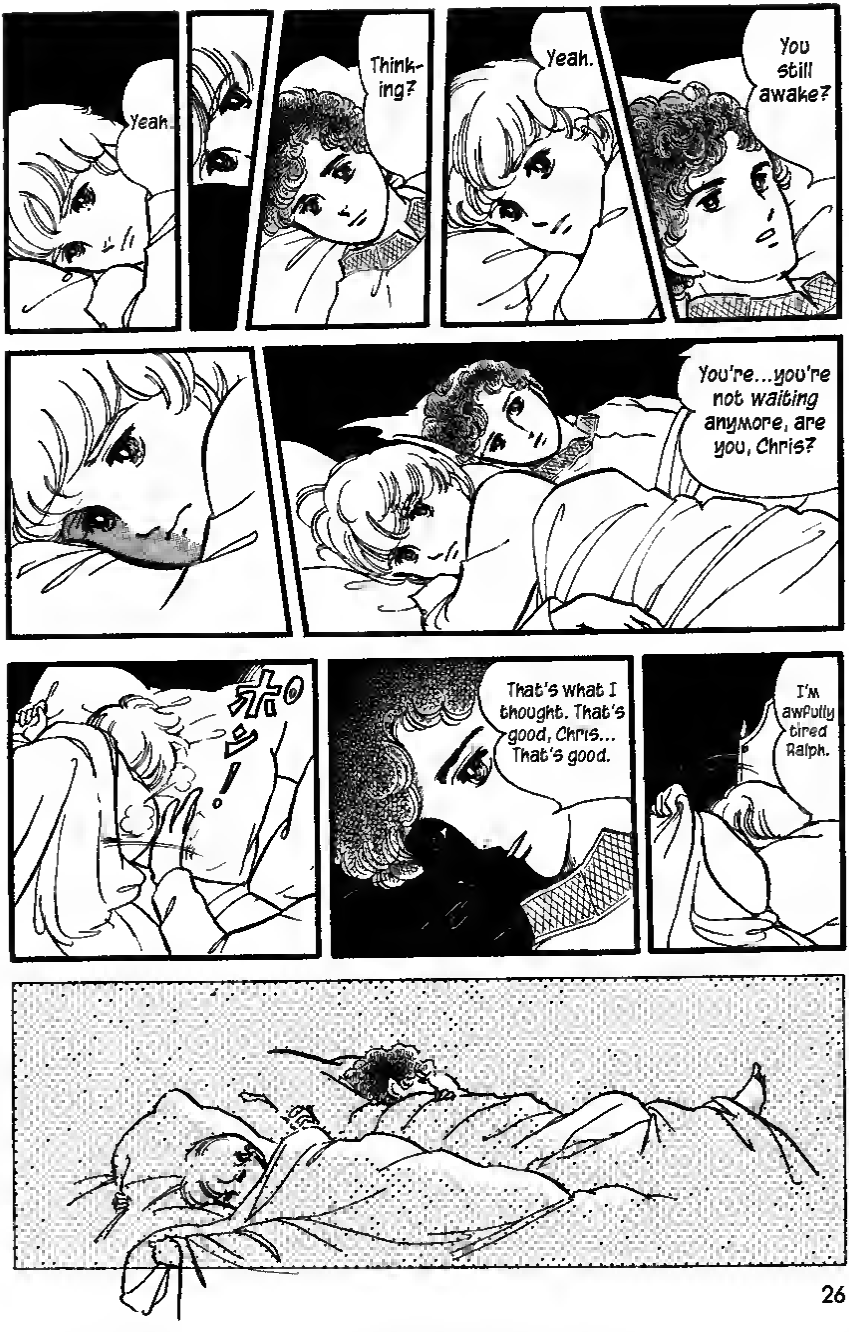
Chris, you have a call.

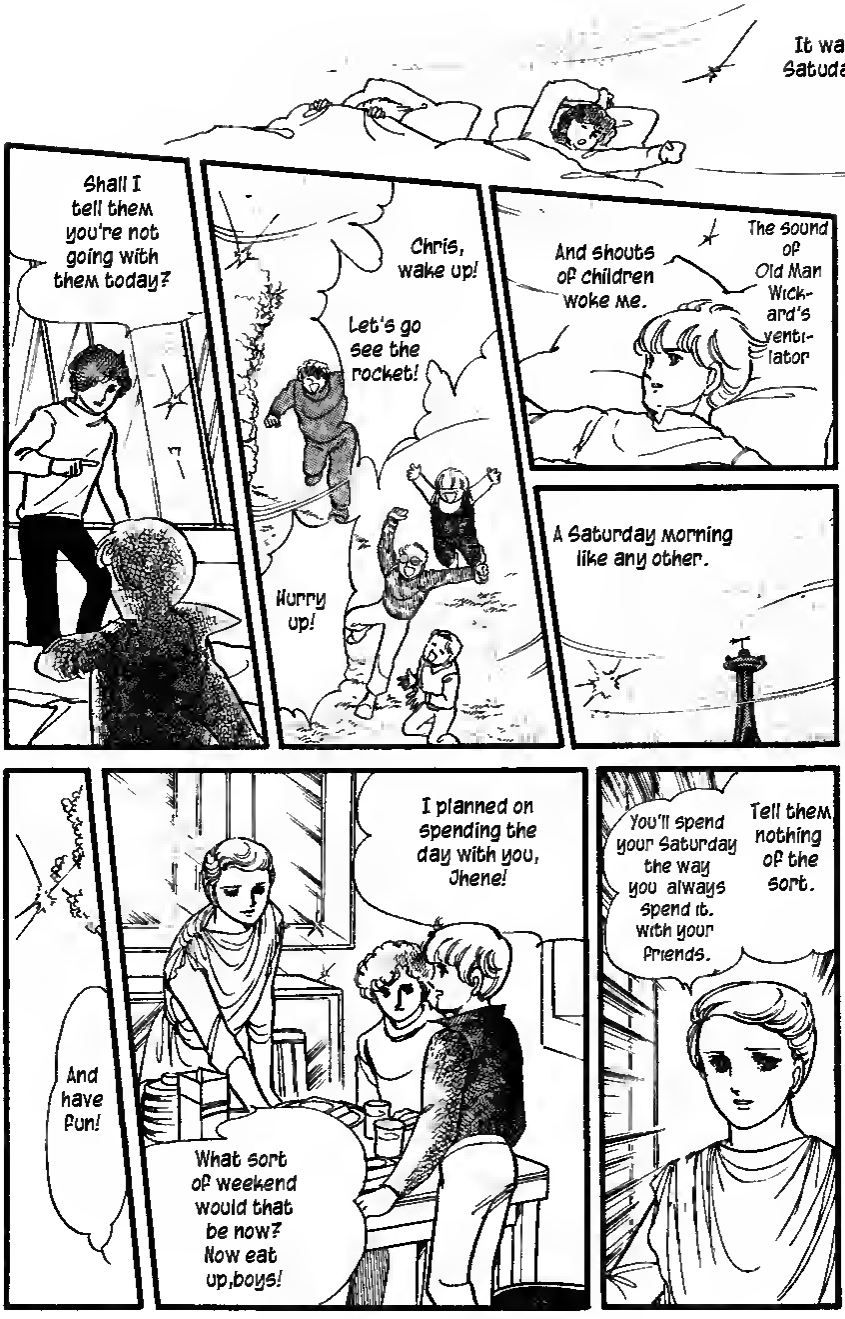

Chris ...

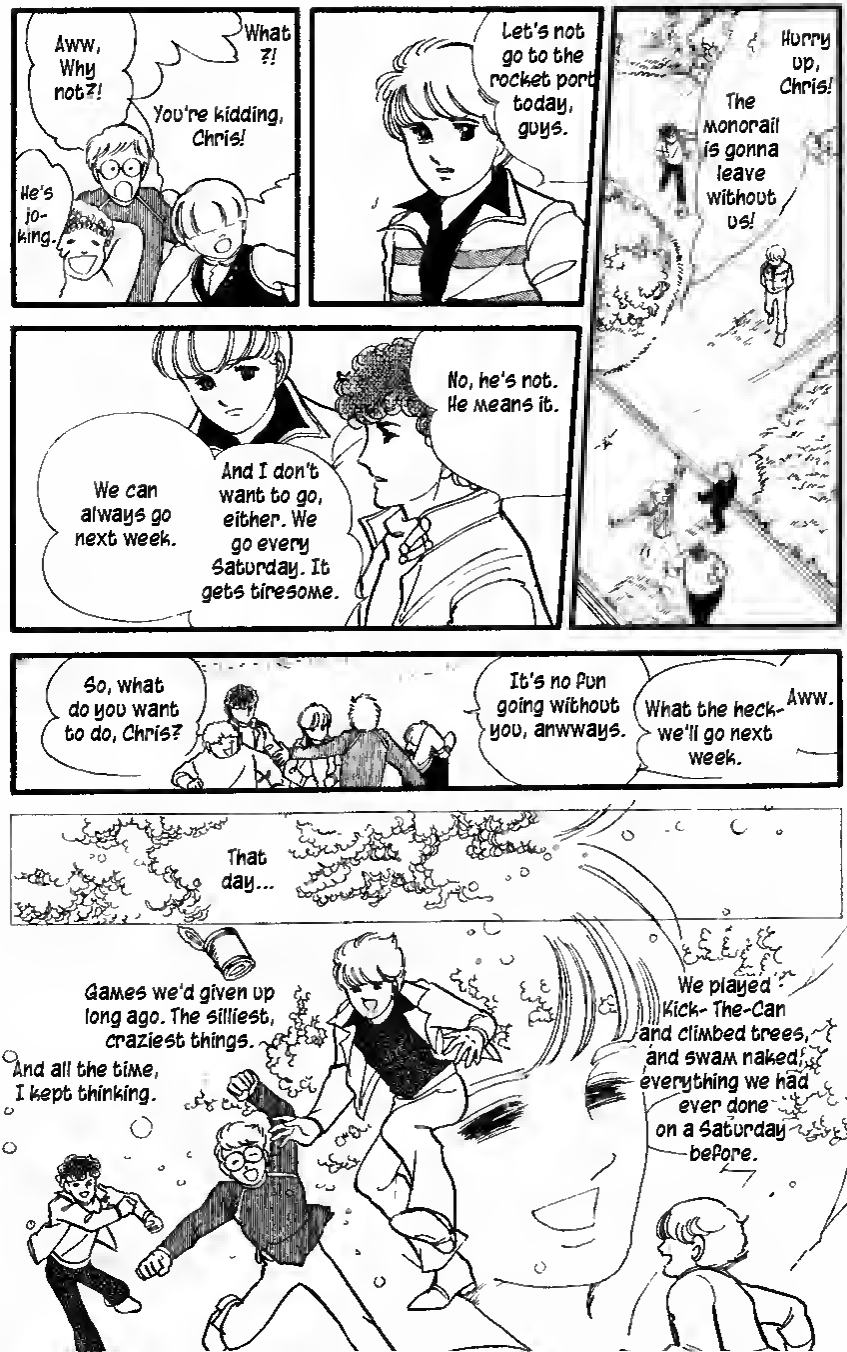
Today is the last day.

The very last night.

Tomorrow I'll be reporting to the space station. This'll be the last night with Jhene and Ralph.


Yeah.
Thinking?
Yeah.
You still awake?
You're...you're not waiting anymore, are you, Chris?
ピ!
That's what I thought. That's good, Chris... That's good.
I'm awfully tired Ralph.


It was Saturday.
Shall I tell them you're not going with them today?
Chris, wake up!
Let's go see the rocket!
Hurry up!
And shouts of children woke me.
The sound of Old Man Wickard's ventilator
A Saturday morning like any other.
I planned on spending the day with you, Jhene!
What sort of weekend would that be now? Now eat up, boys!
And have fun!
You'll spend your Saturday the way you always spend it. With your friends.
Tell them nothing of the sort.

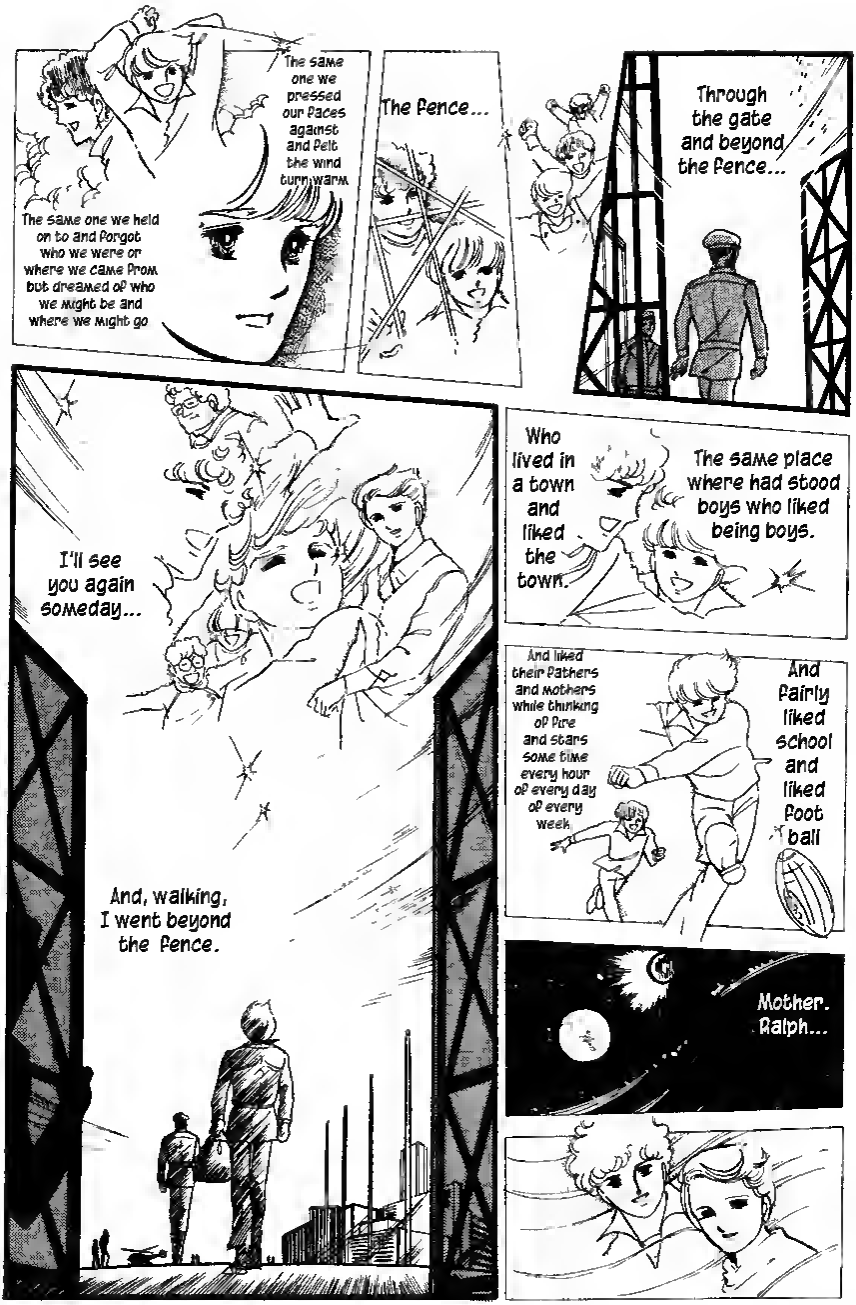

Aww, Why not?!
What?!
You're kidding, Chris!
He's joking.
Let's not go to the rocket port today, guys.
Hurry up, Chris!
The monorail is gonna leave without us!
No, he's not. He means it.
We can always go next week.
And I don't want to go, either. We go every Saturday. It gets tiresome.
So, what do you want to do, Chris?
It's no fun going without you, anwways.
What the heck- we'll go next week.
Aww.
That day...
Games we'd given up long ago. The silliest, craziest things.
And all the time, I kept thinking.
We played "Kick-The-Can" and climbed trees, and swam naked, everything we had ever done on a Saturday before.

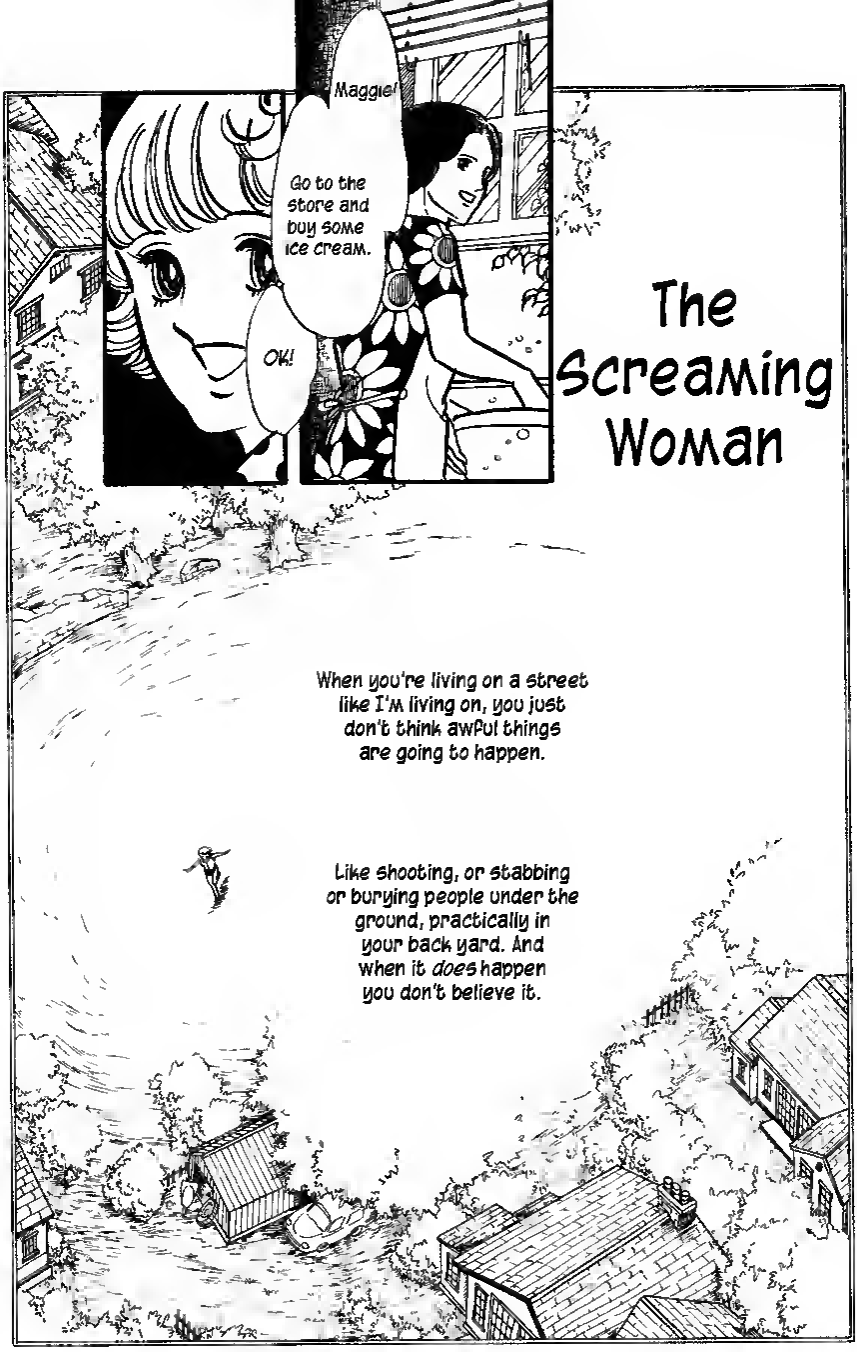
This is the last day.
Sure Thing!
We'll go see the new Sally Gibberts Picture!
Call for me at eight!
What about later on tonight then?
Yeah, sorry.
It's only four.
Going home already, Chris?
A letter and a spool of audio-film lay on my bed.
I had a feeling she wouldn't be here.
It's fine.
That's odd. Where could your mother have gone now of all times?
We're home!
Anybody home?

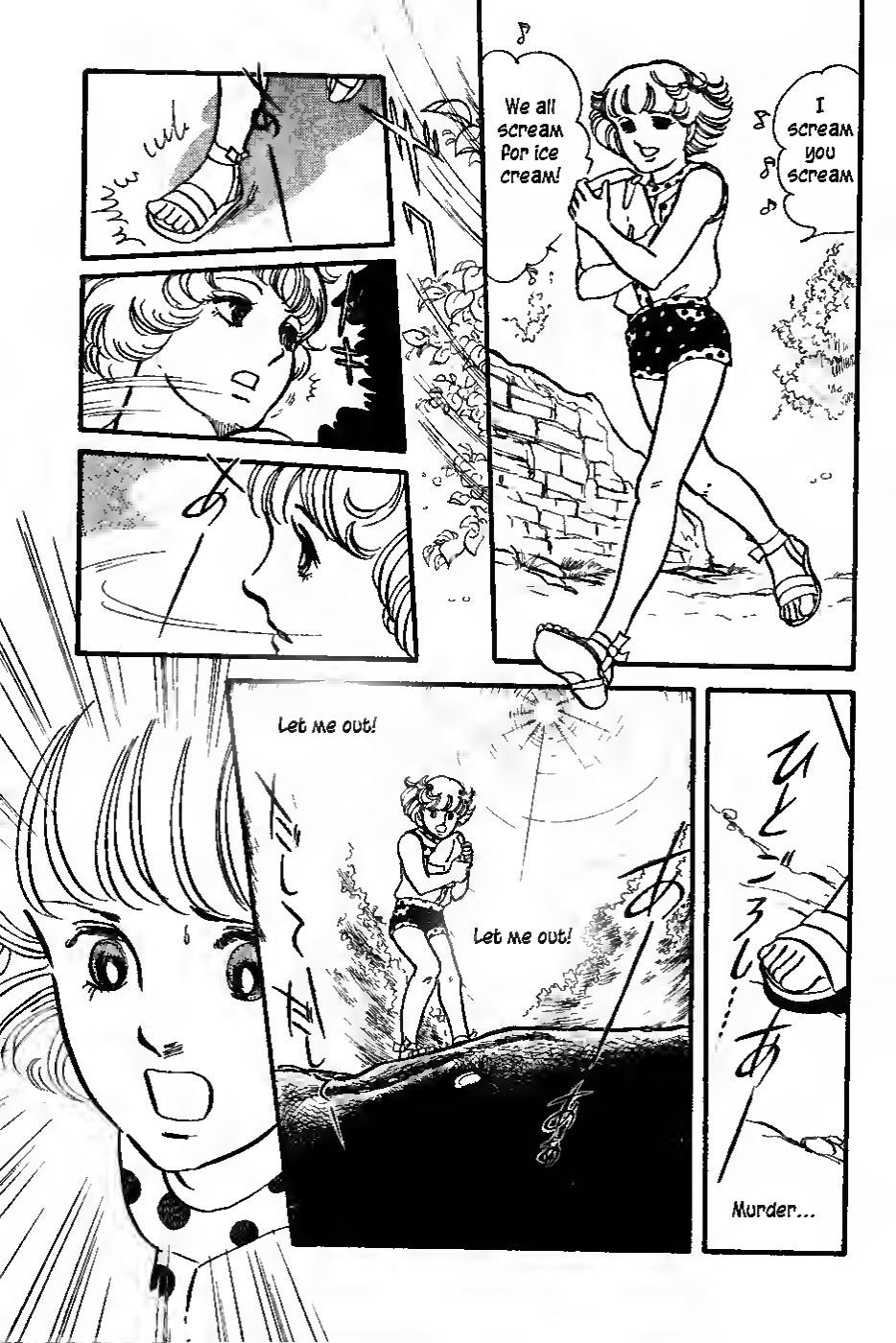
You know I love you more than anything else in the world.
When I see you again... you'll be a man.
I hate goodbyes, Chris.
And so I've gone to the laboratory to do some extra work.
Take Care.
-Hate good byes.
-Know that I love you-
Take care.
Gone to the lab-
I hate good-byes.
Chris.
Tss

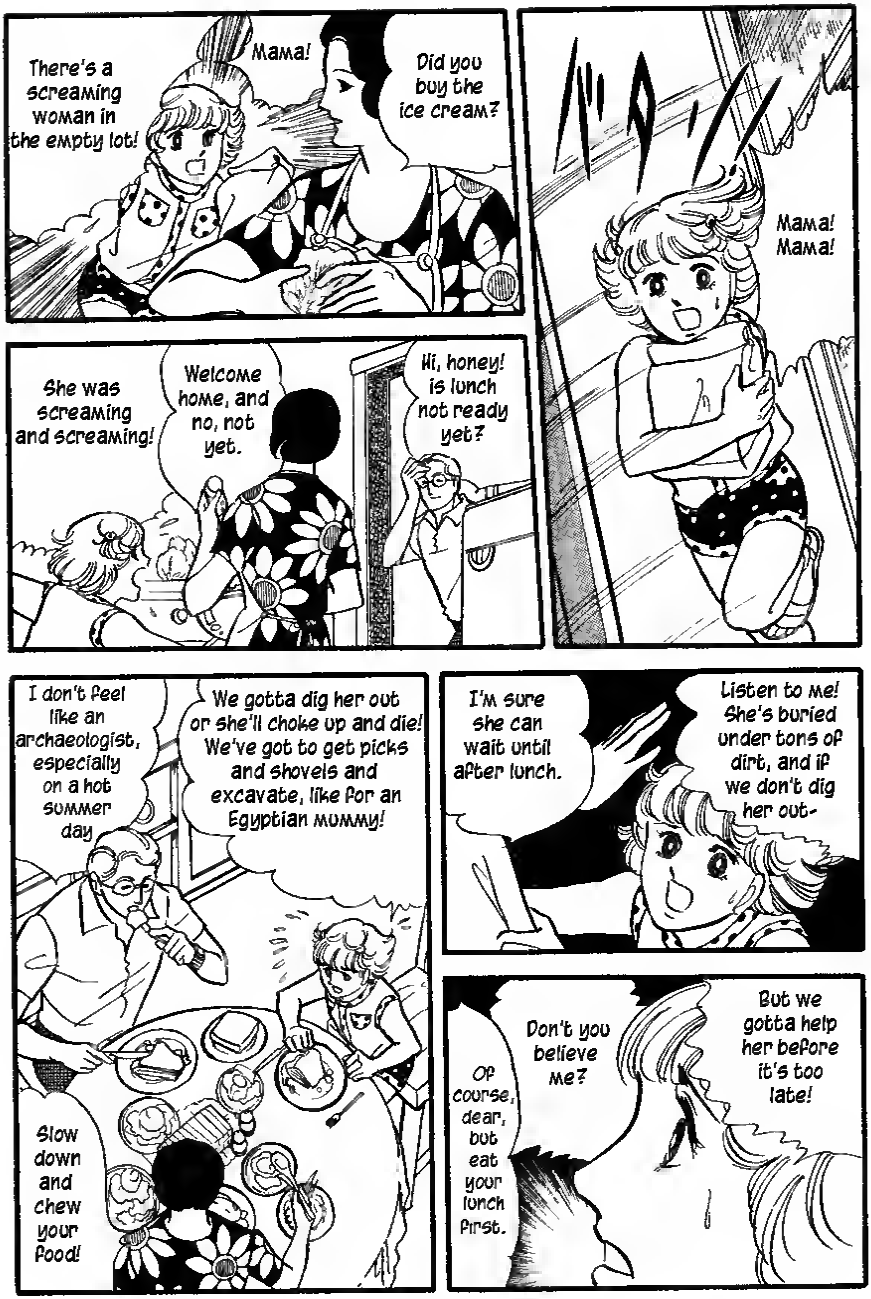
Take care of mother, will you?
Of course.
C'mon, just go along and say yes, will ya?
.....
Well, see you next Saturday, huh, Chris?
Sure! Next Saturday early!
Yeah.
It sure was fun today, wasn't it?
I'll be waiting.
Just like you waited and don't have to wait anymore. I'll wait.
Maybe it won't be long, Ralph. I hope not.

Rocket Station
The Moon Rocket. It was no longer just my dream..
I'll be part of it.
This way.
Reporting, sir!
Yes, Sir!
C.M. Christopherz!


The same one we pressed our faces against and felt the wind turn warm
The same one we held on to and forgot who we were or where we came from but dreamed of who we might be and where we might go
The fence...
Through the gate and beyond the fence...
I'll see you again someday...
Who lived in a town and liked the town.
The same place where had stood boys who liked being boys.
And liked their fathers and mothers while thinking of fire and stars some time every hour or every day or every week
And fairly liked school and liked foot ball
And, walking, I went beyond the fence.
Mother. Ralph...


Maggie!
Go to the store and buy some ice cream.
OK!
The Screaming Woman
When you're living on a street like I'm living on, you just don't think awful things are going to happen.
Like shooting, or stabbing or burying people under the ground, practically in your back yard. And when it *does* happen you don't believe it.


We all scream for ice cream!
I scream you scream
Let me out!
Let me out!
Murder...


There's a screaming woman in the empty lot!
Mama!
Did you buy the ice cream?
Mama! Mama!
She was screaming and screaming!
Welcome home, and no, not yet.
Hi, honey! is lunch not ready yet?
I don't feel like an archaeologist, especially on a hot summer day
We gotta dig her out or she'll choke up and die! We've got to get picks and shovels and excavate, like for an Egyptian mummy!
Slow down and chew your food!
I'm sure she can wait until after lunch.
Listen to me! She's buried under tons of dirt, and if we don't dig her out-
Don't you believe me?
But we gotta help her before it's too late!
Of course, dear, but eat your lunch first.

Dad!
That's enough, Margaret Leary!
But there's a screaming woman buried-
I'm touched!
I'll give you all the money in my piggy bank! I got a whole five dollars! It took me a whole year to save that you can have if you help me!
You just gotta come and help me!
Will you, oh will you?!
Tell you what After lunch, I'll come out and listen to your screaming woman, free of charge,
Yes, but you have to promise you won't mention this screaming whatsis anymore for the rest of lunchtime.
Honest, Maggie, you make your old dad feel like a piker.
You want me to play with you so much, you're willing to pay me for my time!
I'm touched! I'm really touched!
That's nothing new. They're always fighting.
Yes, mama.
Maggie, slow down or you'll choke on your food.
Charles Nesbitt and his wife Helen had another fight last night.
Speaking of screaming women,

Oh it was back when she had the lead for the school play! You know that we used to go out back then!
Yes, yes I know all about lovely little Helen. She was the talk of all the boys in our school.
She even wrote a song for me.
You never told me about a song
That Charlie's got a terrible temper. I'm surprised Helen married such a brute of a husband.
I remember back in high school ....
A real pity. Helen is much too good for him. She's always been so nice and pretty.
Dad, the empty lot! We gotta go now!
Oh, hi, Maggie, your dad's just doing a li'l reminiscing. That song was just between Helen and me. Would you like to hear the song?
Dad! Dad!
That song was a real good song ....
Her dream was to become an actress. A shame it couldn't come true, but...
Oh dear. It's scorching outside.

Dad, look! The ground's been dug up!
Maybe she went to sleep.
But I heard her back then!
For sure!
You're buried under here, aren't you, ma'am?!
I don't hear anything.
Maggie, this is the place where Mr. Kelly dug yesterday, a big hole to bury his trash and garbage in.
ooh!
Don't stay in the heat too long, dear.
No, I'm sure someone else used Mr. Kelly's burying place to bury a woman and covered it all over again.
Whoo, it's hot. Maybe I'll go take a shower.
Darn!
しん!

Dad!
Dad!
She was only taking a break!
Help!
あ!
あ
But now she's screaming again!
Sure, sure.
Oh, dad, we can't let her die!
Here, just take it easy
Getting too worked up in the heat's not good.
You just lie there for the rest of the day.
Dad!
She's all buried like that person in the story by Edgar Allan Poe! And think how awful it is to be screaming and nobody paying attention!

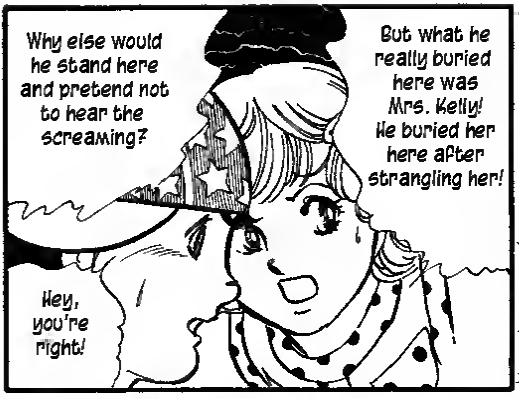
Where's Maggie?
I laid her on her bed to rest from the heat.

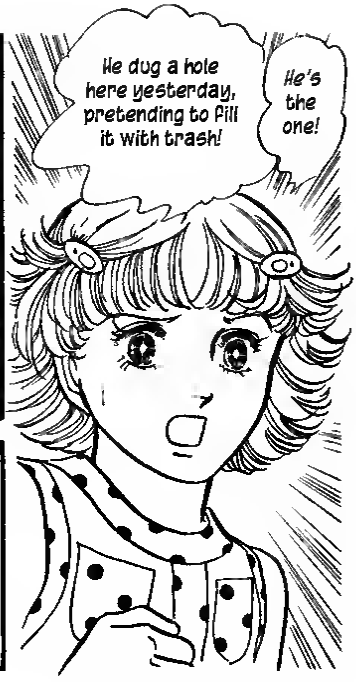
Why won't anyone help me when I'm trying to save a dying person?!
Hold on!
I'll dig you out right now!
Wha'cha doing, Maggie?
Dig for what?
Great, you can help me dig!
Dippy!
Yes!
Really?
There's a woman buried under here!
Can't you hear her screaming?

Hot dog! Did you get one of them throw-your-voice books or tin ventriloquist contraptions in your mouth?
There!
S-sure, I'll teach you if you help me dig!
If I help, will you teach me how to do it, too?
So, what's her name?
Boy, you'd think she was right under foot. You're amazing, Maggie!
Her name's Wilma Schweiger, and she's a rich old woman, 96 years old, and she was buried there by a man named Spike, who counterfeited 10 dollar bills.
Oh, sure.
You must have a name for her.
Who?
The screaming woman.

Aww, I'm tired. I think I'll go home and take a nap.
No, Dippy, just keep digging!
I'm making a sign, here!
What's all this now?!
I got a better idea! let's pretend it's the Princess Ommanatra, an Egyptian Queen, covered in diamonds!
Wait, Dippy, where are you going?
Look, I'll stand over here and you listen there!
No, you can't! There's really a woman buried there!
I wonder who she is.
There's really a woman buried here?
That's what I've been tryin' to tell you! So dig!
Huh?
HEY!
Oh, whatever! A radio's a nice enough find! I'll even give it to you for free!
Say, wouldn't it be awful if it was only a radio buried here after we worked so hard to dig?
Just Dig!
Mrs. Nelson? Mrs. Turner? I wonder if she's pretty Or what color her hair is. Wonder if she's 30 or 60 or 90 years old!

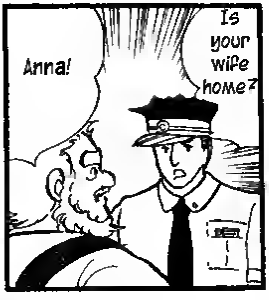
Don't you dig up holes on my land!
Mr. Kelly!
What do you kids think you're doing?
I don't hear a thing!
Just listen!
But, Mr. Kelly, there's a screaming woman!
Cause any more trouble and I'll give you my foot!
Now fill up this darn hole and go home!
Now go back home, you brats.
Good!


Why else would he stand here and pretend not to hear the screaming?
But what he really buried here was Mrs. Kelly! He buried her here after strangling her!
Hey, you're right!


He dug a hole here yesterday, pretending to fill it with trash!
He's the one!

We have to call the police!
He buried her in a box, but she must have came to!

Anna, c'mere for a moment!


Anna!
Is your wife home?

Yes, officer?
Mr. Kelly?

What is it?

ﾊﾝﾊﾝ!

Cheezit! She's still alive!
S-sorry, sir. We knew it sounded like a child made the call, but we still had to be certain...
Can't you tell a prank call from a real one!?
Agh!
Ahhh! It's those blasted kids!
Still alive?
I was left all alone in the world, no one to help me, no one to believe me at all.
The police were after me now, for lying to them, only I didn't know it was lie,
But what about the screaming woman?
I'm never gonna go near that empty lot! Mr. Kelly'll be waiting with razor strap and tambaste the heck out of us!
So long. We sure got in trouble over your darn old ventriloquist voice!
Oh, gosh, no wonder he didn't hear the screams.
To heck with her! Ah, I just remembered, Maggie! Ain't old man Kelly sort of deaf, hard-of-hearing?

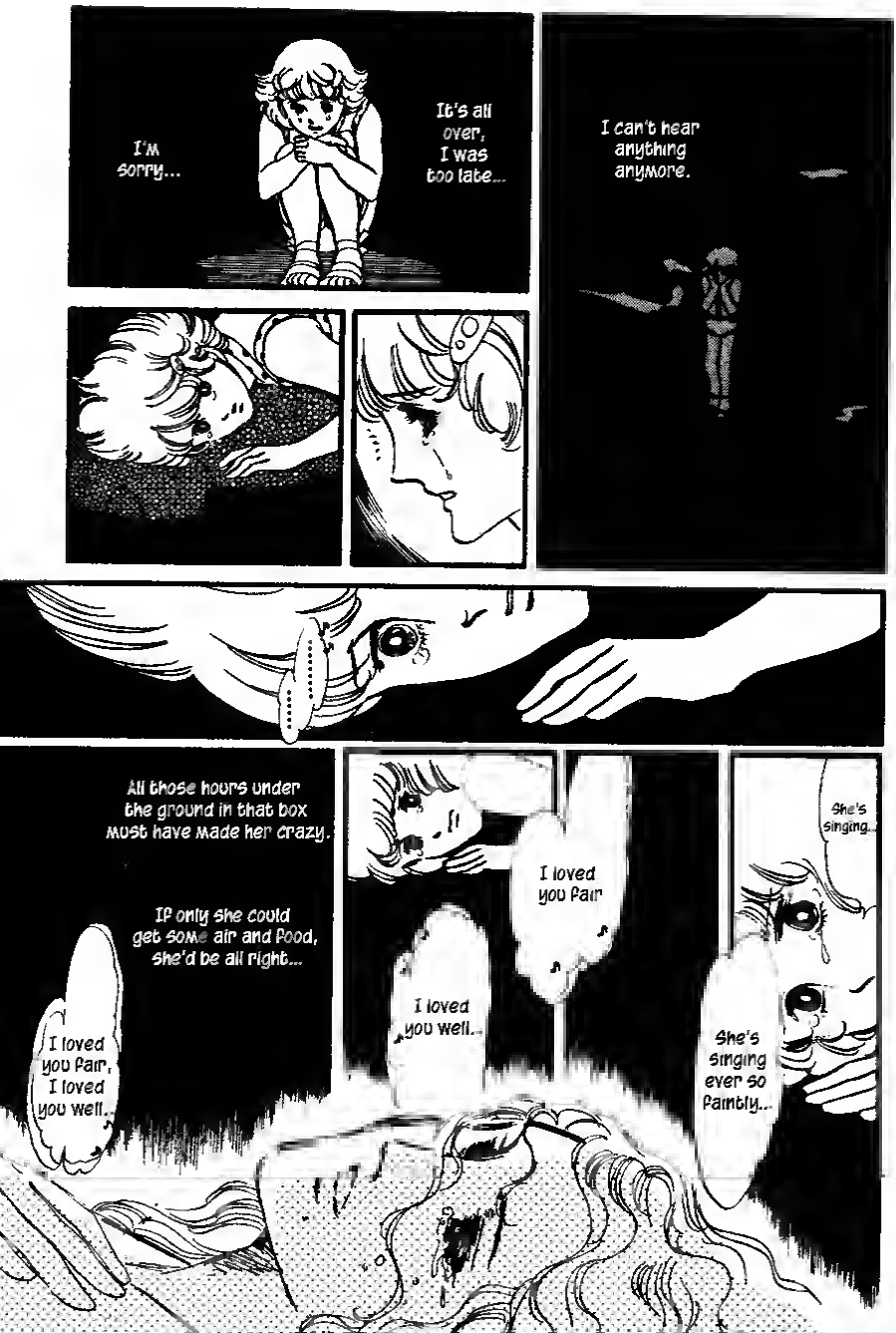
I just wanted to crawl down in that box with the screaming woman and die!
Or would be, once he found my bed empty.
And my father was probably looking for me, too.
I just had to help that poor woman.
Even so.
Heeelp! Let me out!
あ
If I don't hurry, she'll suffocate!
はあ、はあ
Good to see you home.
Hello, Mrs.Dikes!
Hello! I beg your pardon, Mrs. Griswold, but is anyone missing from your house?
Who?! Just who could be the woman buried under the ground?!
I have to hurry!
And no, noone's missing.
Oh, hi, Maggie.

Sorry, she's gone out to the store.
Could I maybe talk to your wife?
The door of Mr. Charlie Nesbitt, who lives next door to us.
This was the last door.
Good evening, Mr. Nesbitt!
Hi, Maggie.
Please let her still be alive...
Then I'll wait.
My, it's a hot day.
I just wanted to tell her a woman is buried over in the empty lot, screaming under tons and tons of dirt.
She's gone to the store, like I said, but, but, she's going on from there to visit her mother, in Schenectady.
Why not?
Say... Listen, kid... I don't think you better, kid.
And what's that?
That's a shame. I wanted to tell her something.

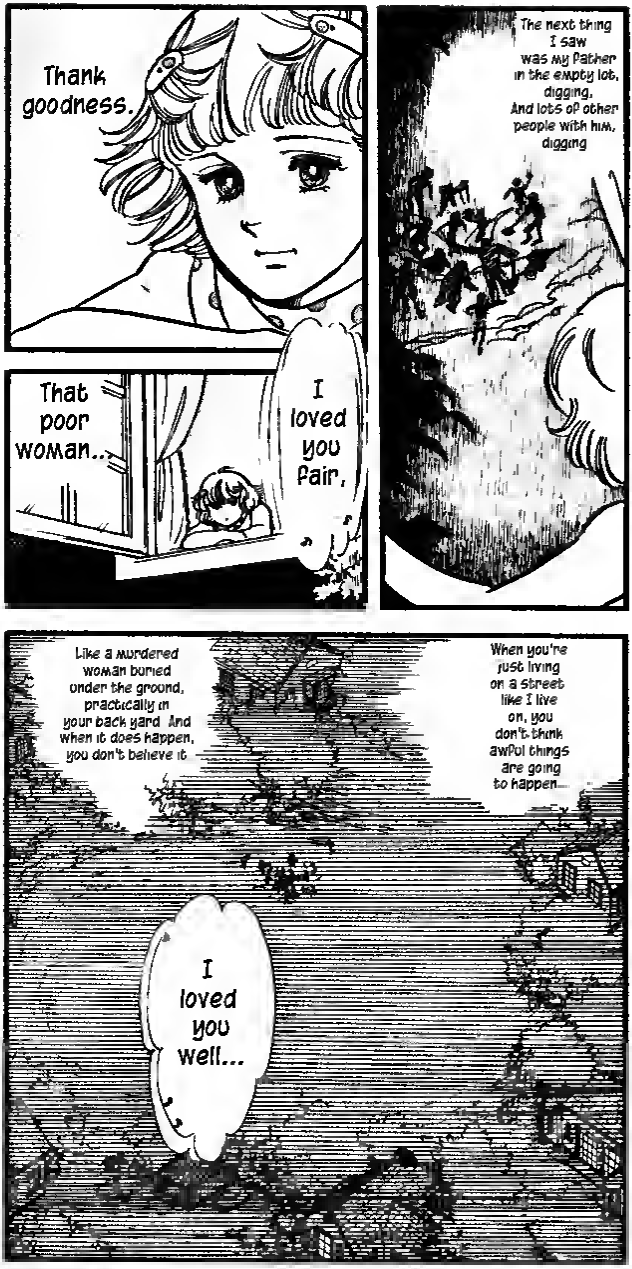
It's a real woman, you know.
Oh, I did.
You dropped your cigarette, Mr. Nesbitt.
I never though of that.
You know, a mandrake. It's a kind of a plant, kid. They scream. I know, I read it once. How you know it ain't one?
What's that?
Really now...? How, how you know it isn't, well, a mandrake root?
You say anything about this to anyone..?
Well you better start thinking. Say, kid..
Nobody would believe me.
But,
Sure, I told lots of people.

Who knows, maybe my wife'll come home while we're playing.
Really?
Sure!
Plenty of time for that later.
Yes, but...
Know how to play cards, kid?
You're nothing but a kid. Why should they listen to you?
Haha, of course.
Thanks, but I gotta go dig.
Wait –
Well,
I'm going back now to dig her out.
Say, about that voice.. Is it loud?
One more game. Wait another hour, my wife'll come.
I gotta go now, it's getting late.
HAHAHA!
Haha. A screaming woman. You and your kid games.
No, it gets weaker all the time...

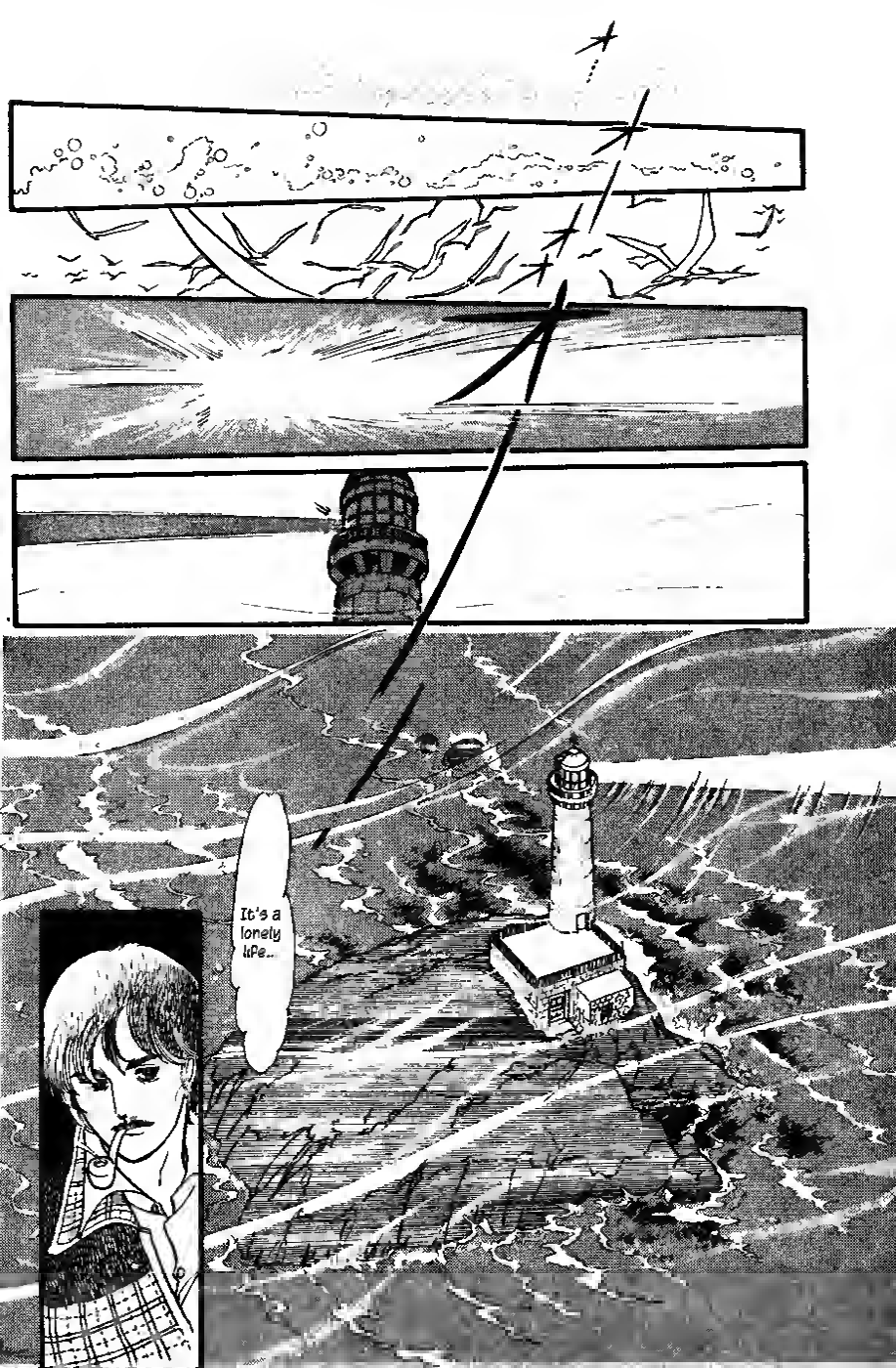
Well, see you later, Maggie.
Looks my wife won't be coming back tonight.
Some body...
Ahh..
Let..
Help..
Ah..
Me out..
The screaming got Painter and Painter in my mind.
What can I do?
I knew his plan was probably to sneak down in the middle of the night,
Dig up his wife, and take her somewhere else to bury her for good.
Oh what do I do?
And after how calling the police about Mr. Kelly turned out, they'd just think it was another prank call..
Tell my folks? But they hadn't believed me. Call the police? But he said his wife was away visiting family. Nobody would believe me.


I'm sorry...
It's all over, I was too late...
I can't hear anything anymore.
All those hours under the ground in that box must have made her crazy.
If only she could get some air and food, she'd be all right...
I loved you fair, I loved you well...
I loved you fair
I loved you well...
She's singing...
She's singing ever so faintly...

"I loved you Pair, I loved you well..."
She's out there singing,
Stop talking about her!
She's not screaming anymore...
She's singing now.
So there you are!
Maggie!
You're going to get a licking now, missy!
I loved you Pair,
I loved you well...
You can't know it! Nobody knew it, except for her and me!
B-but that's Helen's song, the one she wrote, years ago, for me!
Out in the empty lot, just now.
Where did you hear that song!?
Oh, dear God, what have I done?!
Helen!


Thank goodness.
That poor woman...
I loved you fair,
The next thing I saw was my father in the empty lot, digging, And lots of other people with him, digging
Like a murdered woman buried under the ground, practically in your back yard. And when it does happen, you don't believe it
When you're just living on a street like I live on, you don't think awful things are going to happen...
I loved you well...

# The Fog Horn


It's a lonely life...

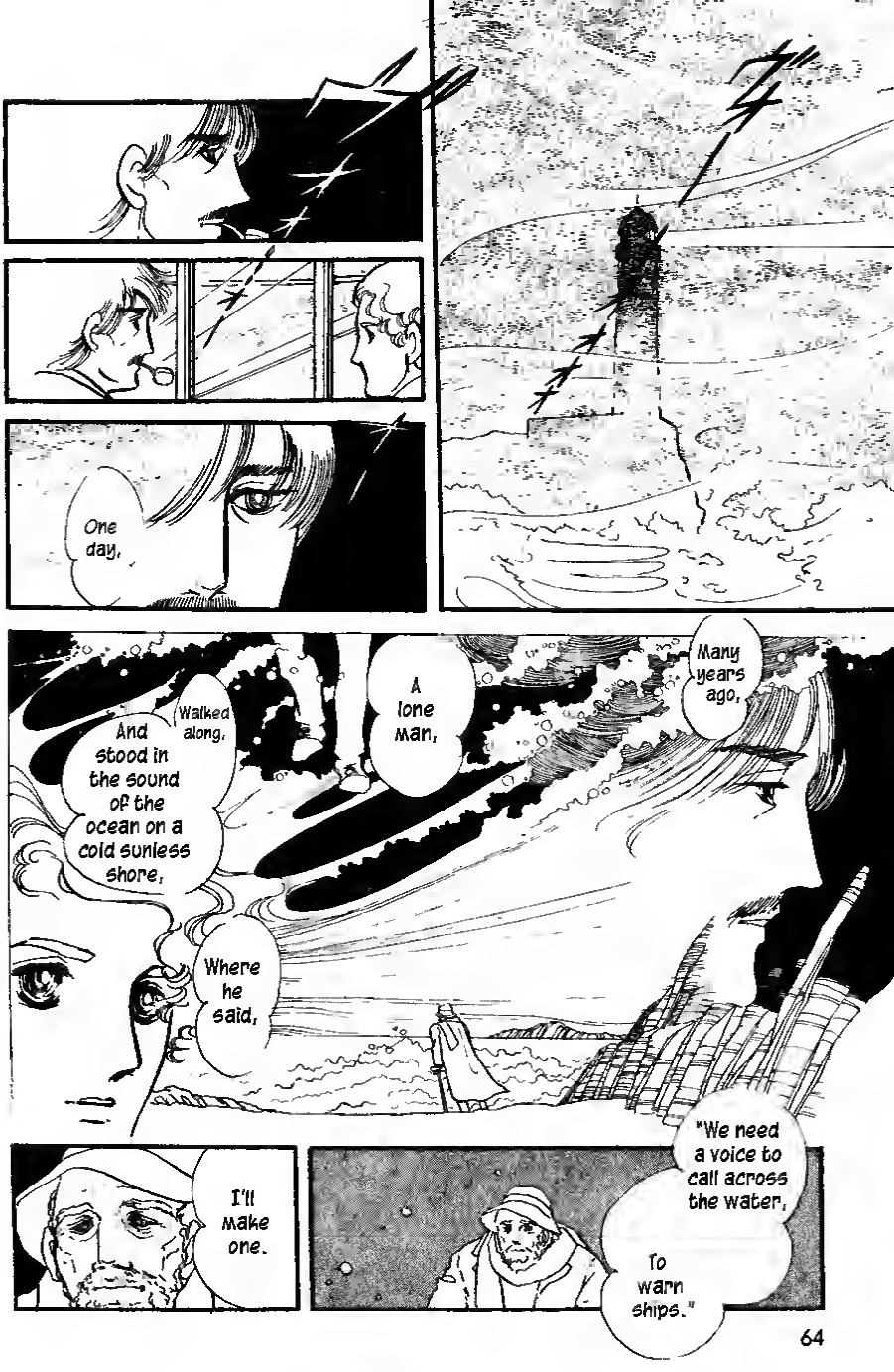
What do you think by yourself when I leave you out here alone?
To dance the ladies and drink gin.
Well, it's your turn on land tomorrow,
But you're used to it now, aren't you, Johnny?
Thanks to you being such a good talker, McDunn.
Yes,
The mysteries of the sea...
A stretch of 2 miles of cold water out to our rock.
Not a town for a 100 miles down the coast.
Just a lonely road,
That comes through dead country to the sea with few cars or ships.
This here,
Is a lonely place.
On the mysteries of the sea....

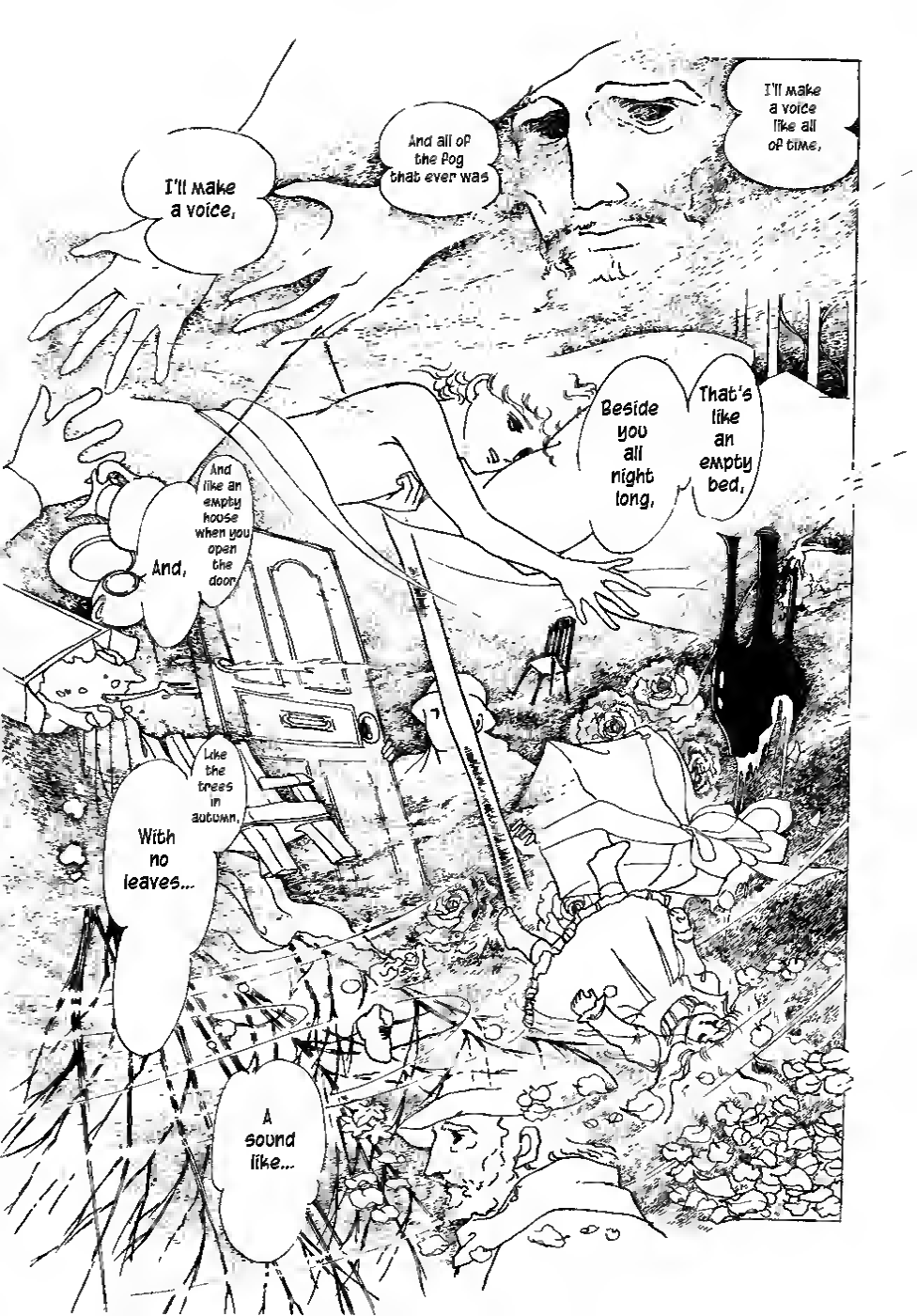
You know,
The ocean's the biggest damned snowflake ever!
No two colors, No two shapes
No two alike.
Stra-nge.
One night, years ago, I was here alone, when all of the fish in the sea surfaced out here.
I wonder why.
Something made them swim in and lie in the bay....
Sort of trem-bling,
And staring up at the tower light.
I could see their funny eyes reflected by the tower light,
As it flashed red, white, red, white across them.
But after midnight, without so much as a sound, they all slipped away.
Imagine how the tower must've looked to them, standing 70 feet above the water,
The god-light fleshing out from it, and the tower declaring itself with a monster voice.
They never came back, those fish,
But don't you think for a while they thought they were in the presence?

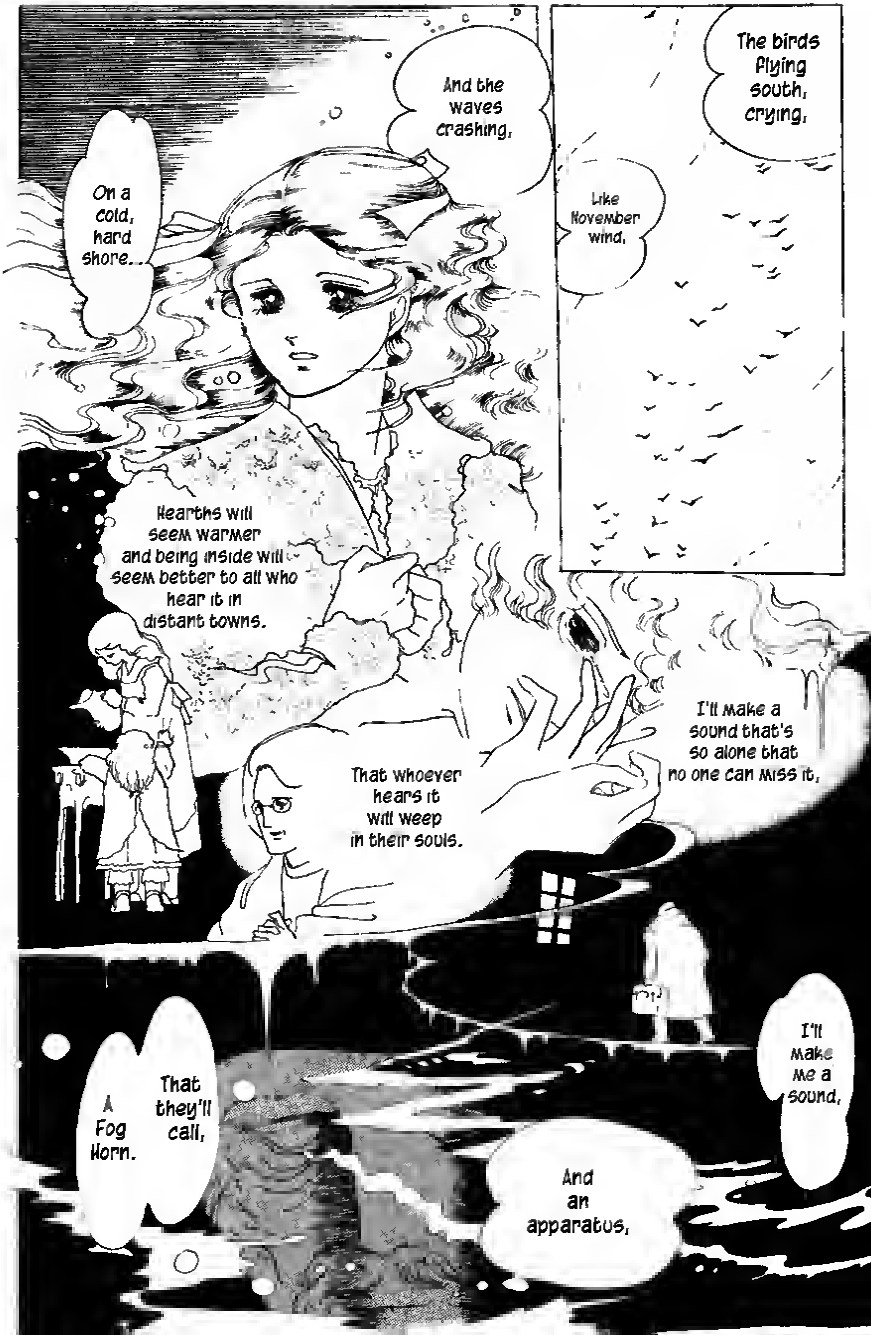
Because you see,
In any case, what I'm trying to say is the sea's Pull..
McDunn?
It'll be 10,000 centuries before we set Poot.
It's an ancient world below the waters.
On the real bottom oP the sunken lands, in the Pairy kingdoms there, and know real terror
For all our engines and so-called submarnes
Think oP it, it's still the year 300,000 BC down under there...
In a time as old as the beard oP a comet
They've been living beneath the sea twelve miles deep and cold
While we've paraded around with trumpets, lopping oPP each other's countries and heads
I got something special I been saving up to tell you?
Johnny, could you come with me Por a minute?
Yes...
An ancient world.

A big lonely animal crying in the night...
Sounds like an animal, don't it?
Sitting here,
On the edge of ten billion years while calling out to the Deeps,
In turn,
And,
"I'M here."
"I'M here."
"I'M here."
The Deeps do answer.
Yes, they do..

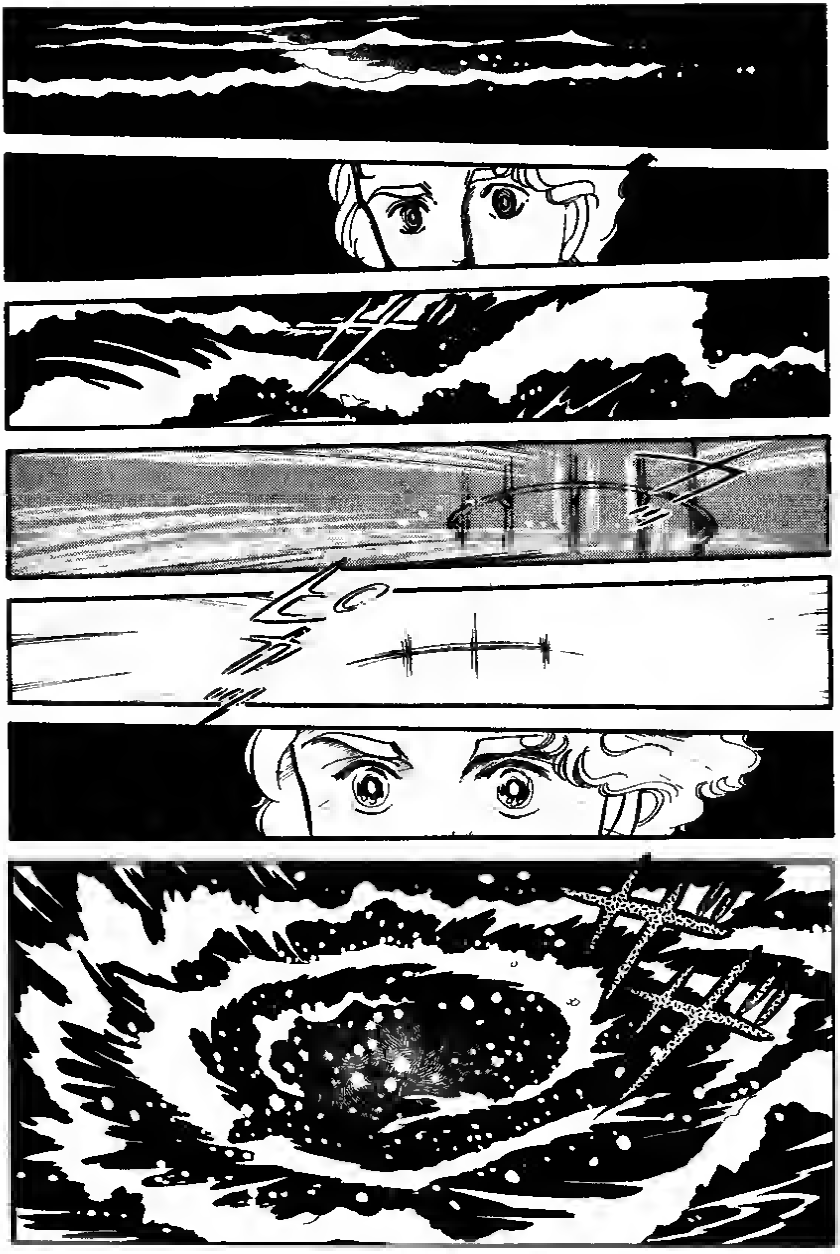
The school of fish?
No, something else entirely.
Something comes to visit the lighthouse.
About this time of year.
You've been here now for 3 months, so I better prepare you.
I've put off telling you because you might think I'm daft, but tonight's the latest I can put it off..
If I marked my calendar correctly, tonight's the night it comes.
And drive on back to some little inland town and keep your lights burning nights.
If you want, tomorrow you can pack your duffel and take the motorboat in to land,
I won't question or blame you.
Tonight's the night what comes?
Johnny.
Just wait and watch.
It's happened 3 years now, and this is the only time anyone's been here with me to verify it.
Mc-Dunn.


One day,
Many years ago,
A lone man,
Walked along,
And stood in the sound of the ocean on a cold sunless shore,
Where he said,
"We need a voice to call across the water,
To warn ships."
I'll make one.


I'll make a voice,
And all of the Dog that ever was
I'll make a voice like all of time,
That's like an empty bed,
Beside you all night long,
And,
And like an empty house when you open the door
Like the trees in autumn,
With no leaves...
A sound like...


The birds flying south, crying,
Like November wind,
And the waves crashing,
On a cold, hard shore...
Hearths will seem warmer and being inside will seem better to all who hear it in distant towns.
That whoever hears it will weep in their souls.
I'll make a sound that's so alone that no one can miss it,
I'll make me a sound,
And an apparatus,
That they'll call,
A Fog Horn.

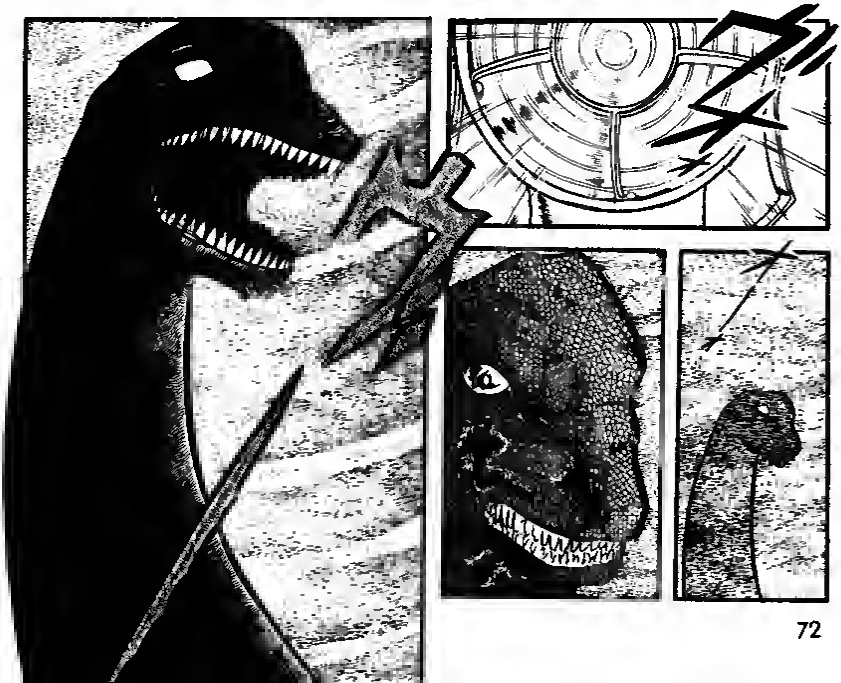
And whoever hears it,
Will know the sadness of eternity,
And the briefness of life.
The Fog Horn calls it,
To try to explain why this thing keeps coming back to the lighthouse every year.
I made up this story...
Sshh!
But-
And it comes...



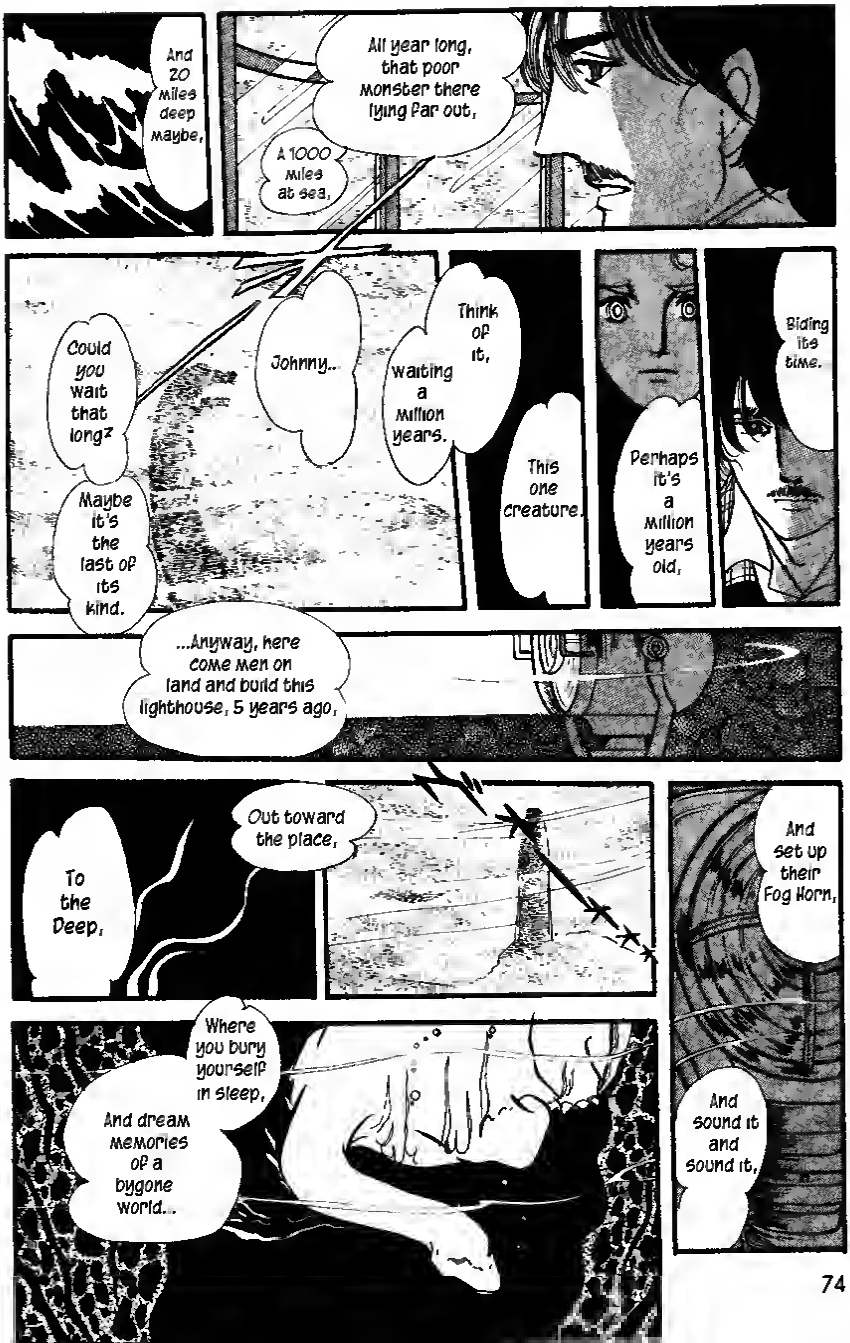
Calm down!
No, it's not impossible!
B-b-b-b-but that... That t-thing! It's impossible!
It's us and the land that've changed, and become impossible. Us!
If anything, we're impossible! That thing's like it always was ten million years ago. It hasn't changed.
Is it some sort of...
I believe so.
Dinosaur?
But they all died out long ago!
No, only hid away.

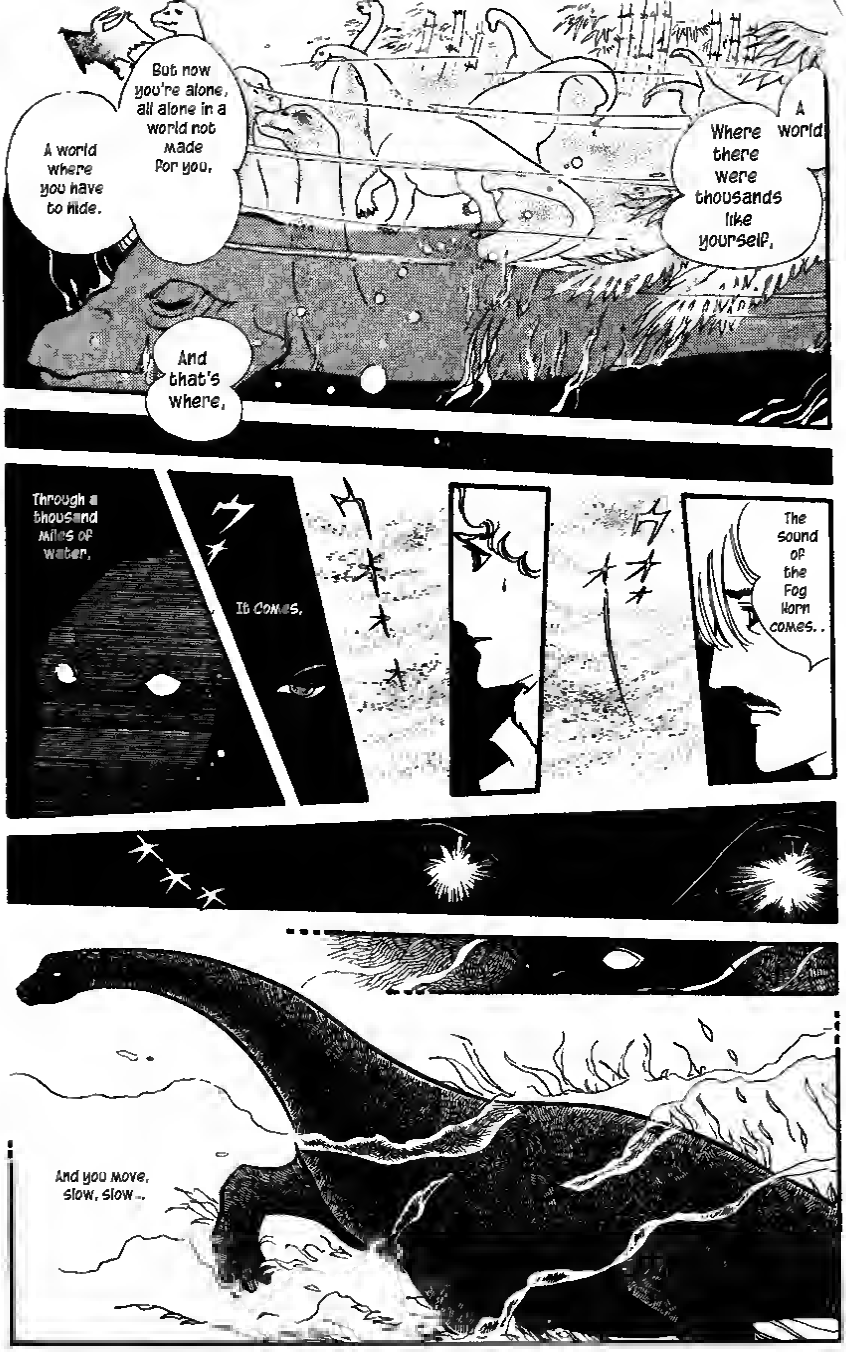
It say so much, the Deeps.
A word that contains all the coldness, darkness, and deepness in the world.
Deep, deep down in the deepest Deeps.
Away in the Deeps.

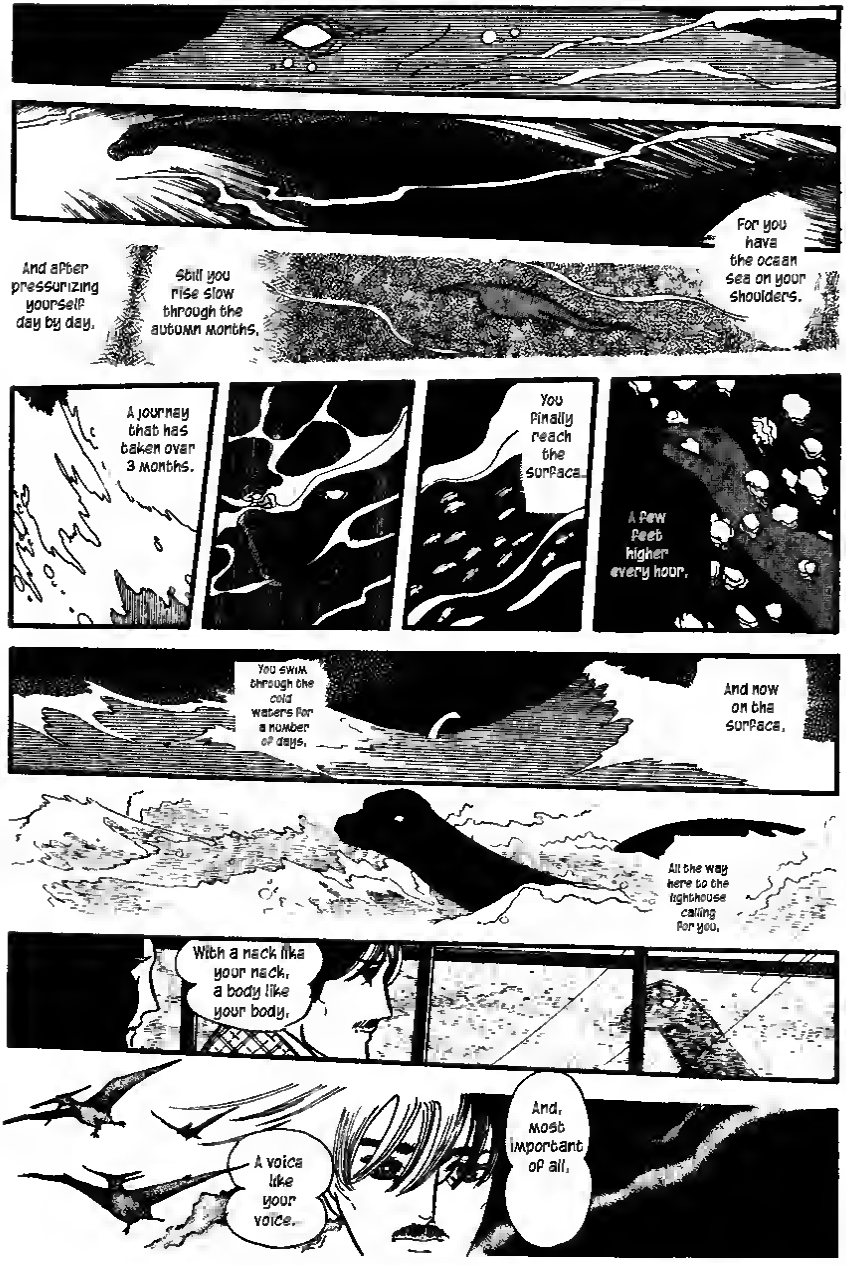
But here...
But why does it come here?
Besides, we're safer here than in any boat trying to get to land. That thing's as big as a destroyer and almost as swift.
We got our job, we can't leave.
Do?
What do we do!?



The Fog Horn calls it here.
The Fog Horn..


And 20 miles deep maybe,
All year long, that poor monster there lying far out,
A 1000 miles at sea,
Could you wait that long?
Maybe it's the last of its kind.
Johnny..
Think of it,
waiting a million years.
This one creature.
Perhaps it's a million years old,
Biding the time.
...Anyway, here come men on land and build this lighthouse, 5 years ago,
To the Deep,
Out toward the place,
And set up their Fog Horn,
Where you bury yourself in sleep,
And dream memories of a bygone world...
And sound it and sound it,

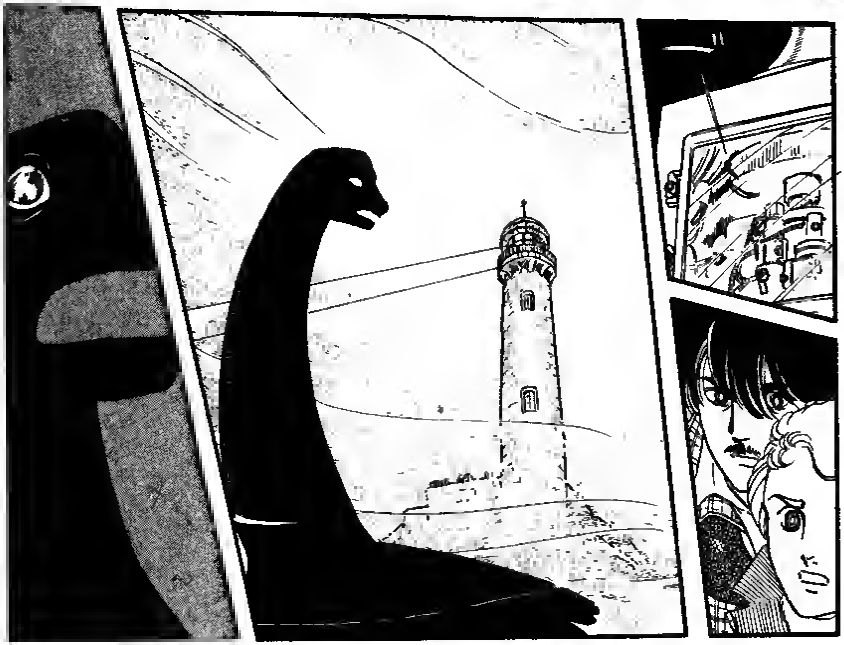

But now you're alone, all alone in a world not made for you,
A world where you have to hide.
A world where there were thousands like yourself,
And that's where,
Through a thousand miles of water,
It comes.
The sound of the Fog Horn comes. .
And you move, slow, slow ..


For you have the ocean sea on your shoulders.
Still you rise slow through the autumn months,
And after pressurizing yourself day by day,
A journey that has taken over 3 months.
You finally reach the surface.
A few feet higher every hour.
You swim through the cold waters for a number of days,
And now on the surface,
All the way here to the lighthouse calling for you,
With a neck like your neck, a body like your body,
A voice like your voice.
And, most important of all,

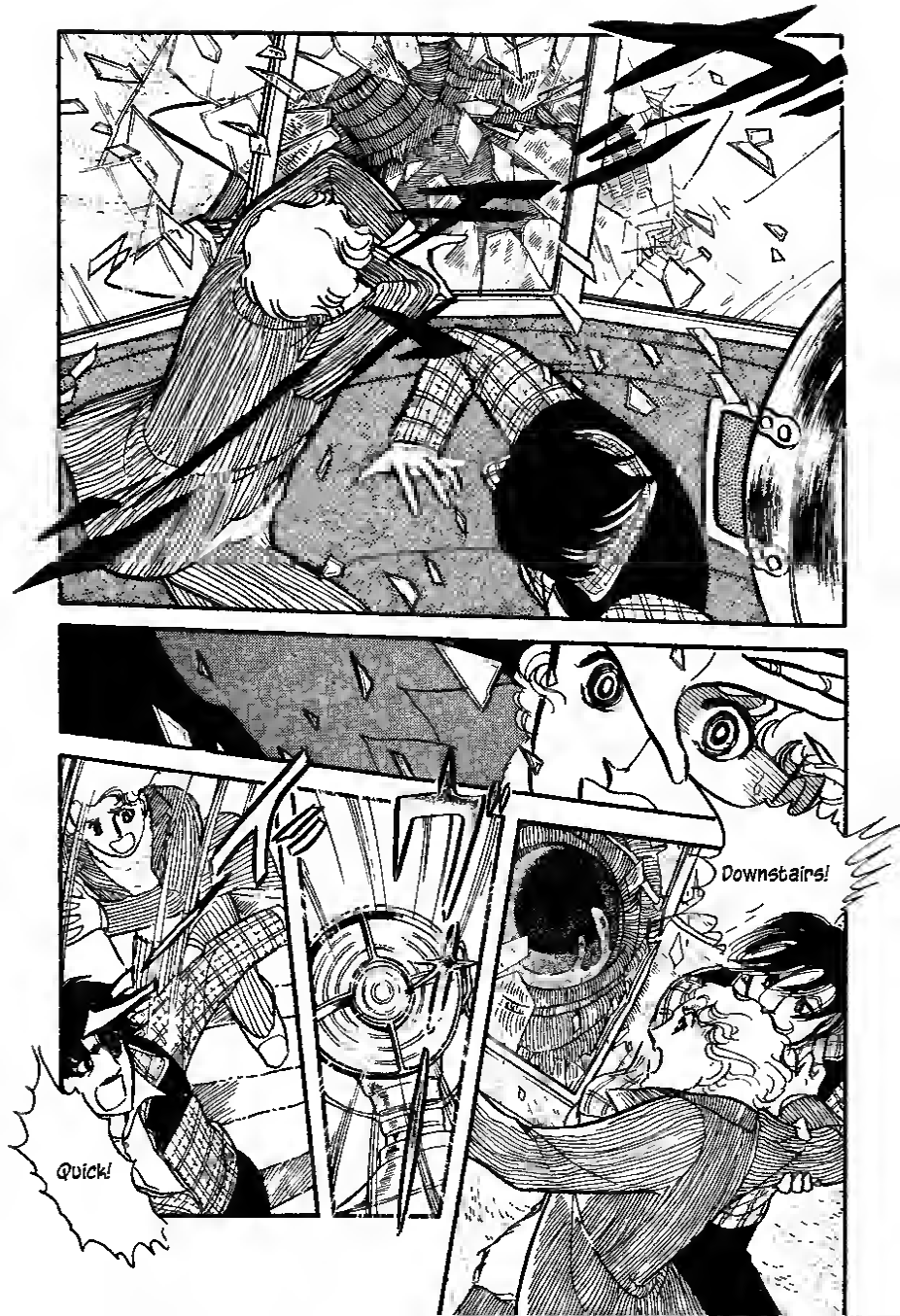
The sloths and saber-tooths had their day and sank in tar pits, and men ran like white ants upon the hills
For millions and millions of years you waited alone. For someone to come back who never came back. The million years of isolation at the bottom of the sea, while the skies cleared of reptile-birds.
Or perhaps even a bit angry after coming all this way
Puzzled or afraid, maybe.
Never coming too near.
Last year, that creature swam round and round all night.
That's life for you.
I suppose it's been brooding on it for a year now, thinking it over from every which way.
And the monster swam off away from the heat and silence and didn't come back.
But the next day, the fog lifted and the sky came out fresh amidst the blue sky
And after a while...
Always some one loving something more than that thing loves them.
Someone always waiting for someone who never comes home.

McDunn!
Let's see what happens.

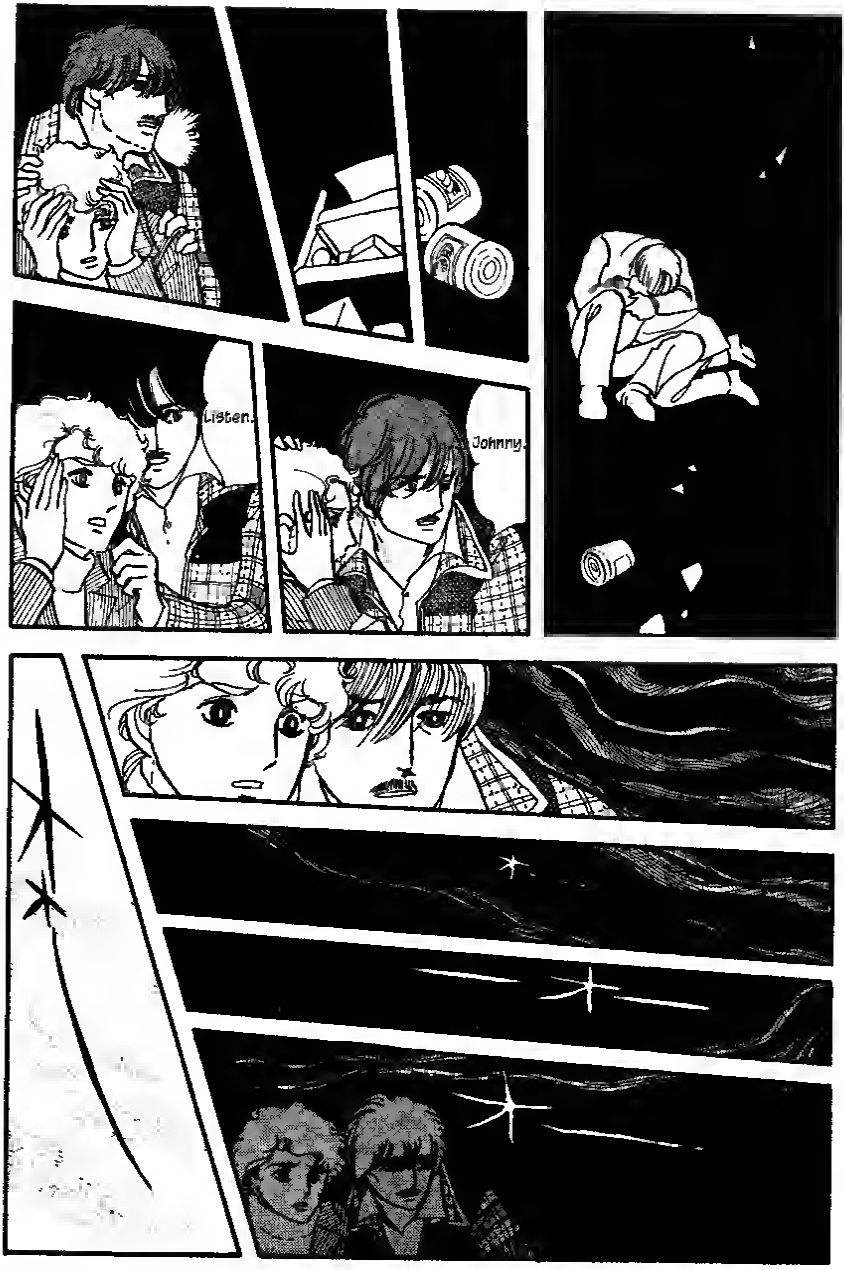
You want to destroy whatever that thing is, so it can't hurt you no more.

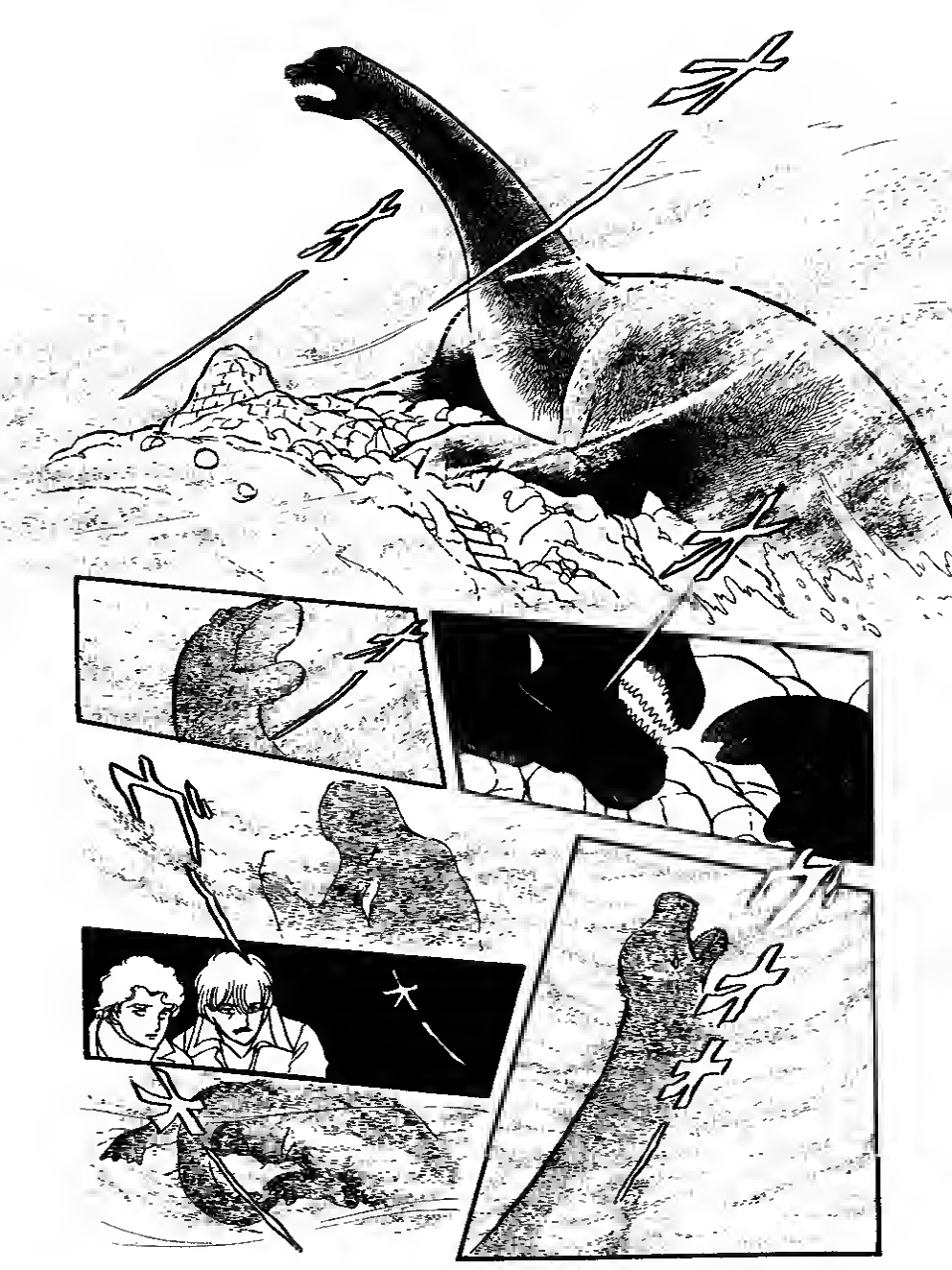


Turn the horn back on!
McDunn!


Downstairs!
Quick!

To the cellar!


Listen.
Johnny.



The monster sent out the sounds of a Fog Horn, again and again...

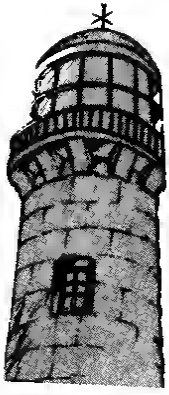
And ships far at sea, not finding the light, not seeing anything, but passing and hearing late that night, must've thought,

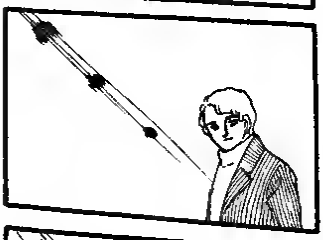
"All's well. We've rounded the cape."

"There it is, the lonely sound, the Lonesome Bay horn."

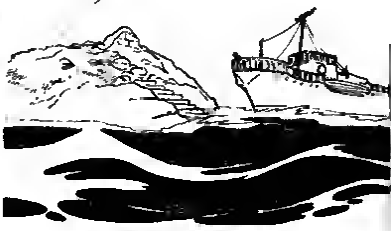
And so it continued,

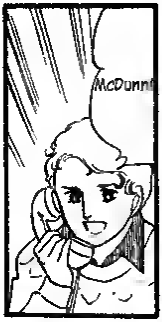
For the rest of that night...

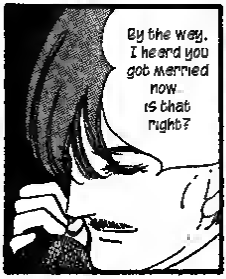




The sun was hot and yellow the next afternoon when the rescuers came out to dig us from our stoned-under cellar.

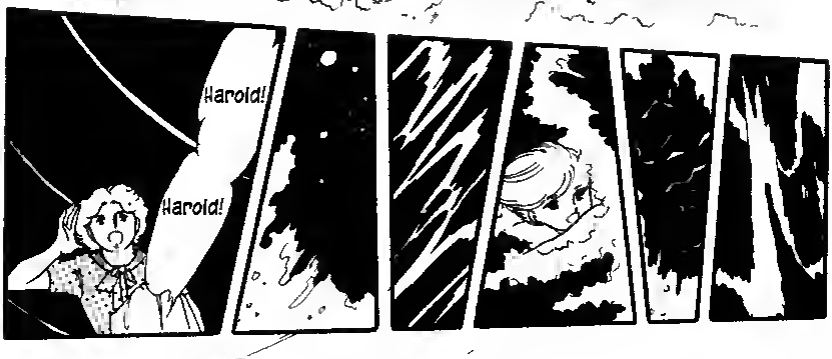




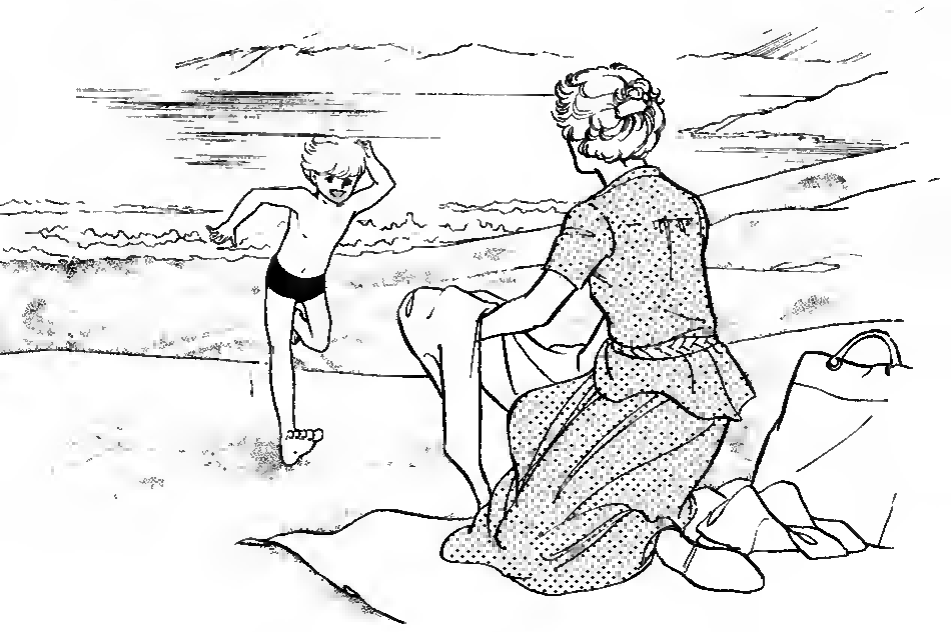


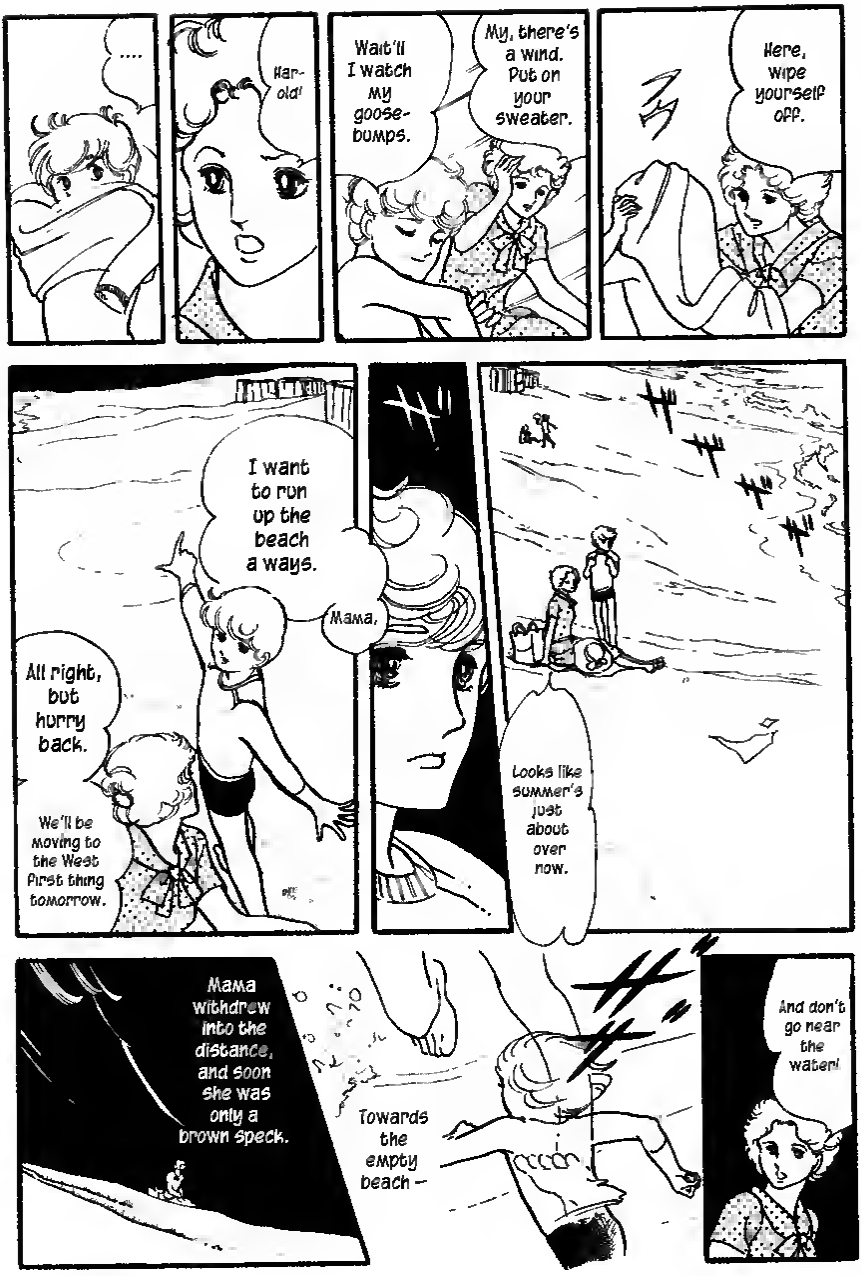
It's gone away.
What happened to it...?
You just can't love it too much.
I think that no matter how much you love anything in this world,
Gone back to the Deeps
Johnny
...Yes, it must've learned that too
To wait another million years...
It's fine, thank you.
Lonesome Bay's up ahead but I doubt you'll see anything in this thick fog
The poor thing, it must've gone back to the deepest Deeps.

While man comes and goes on this pitiful little planet.
Waiting out there,
Waiting and waiting.

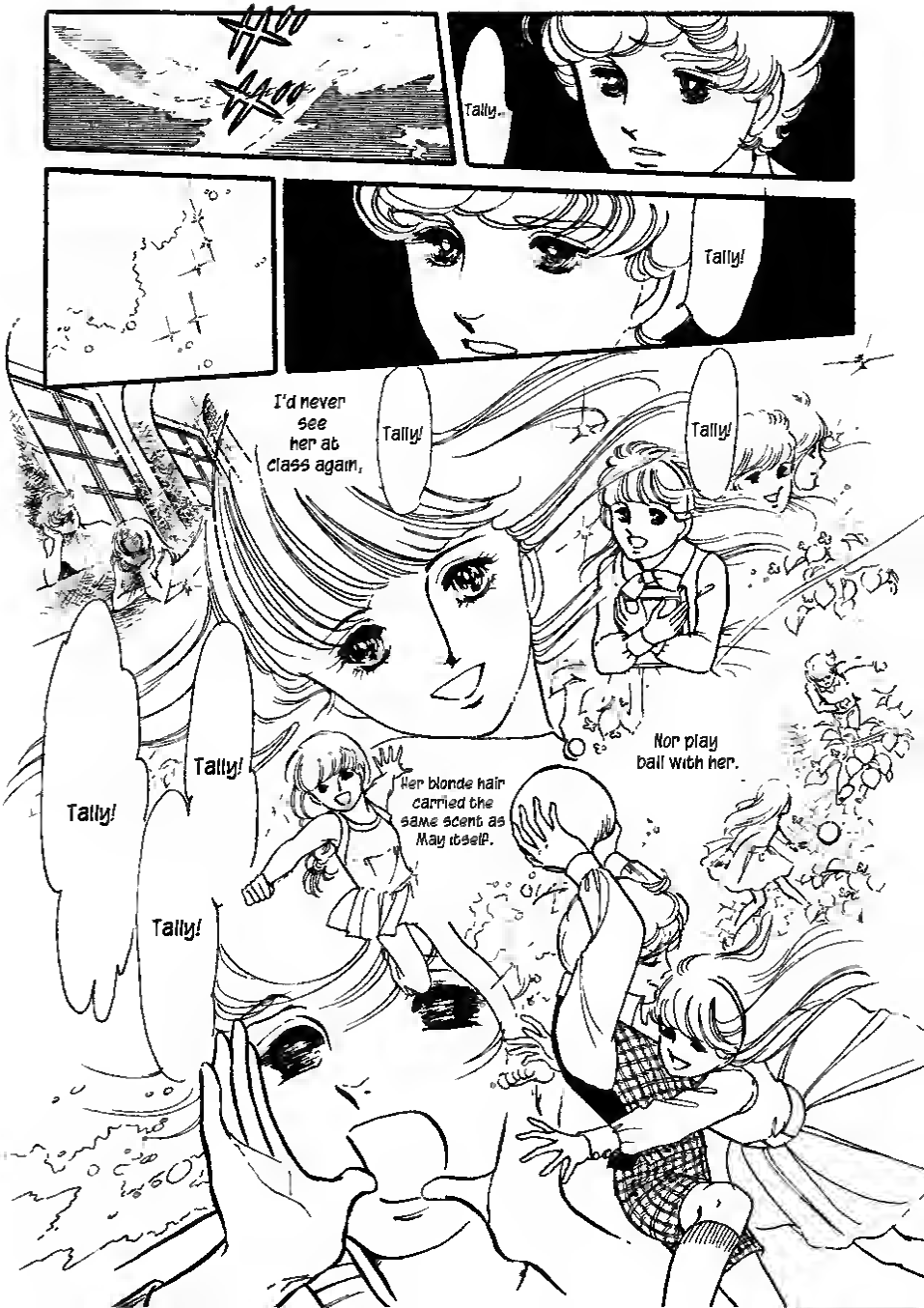



# The Lake



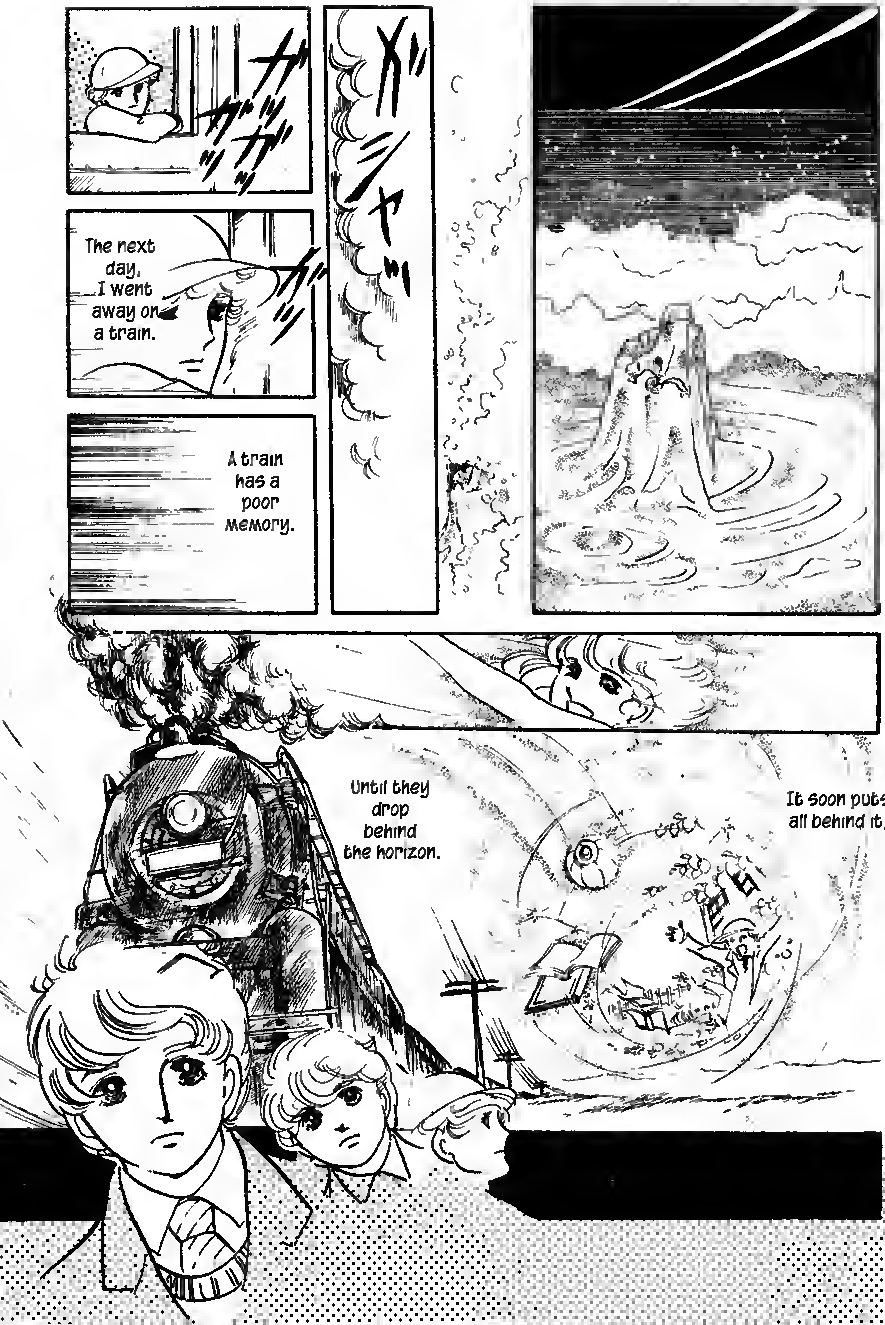

....
Harold!
Wait'll I watch my goose-bumps.
My, there's a wind. Put on your sweater.
Here, wipe yourself off.
I want to run up the beach a ways.
Mama,
All right, but hurry back.
We'll be moving to the West first thing tomorrow.
Looks like summer's just about over now.
Mama withdrew into the distance, and soon she was only a brown speck.
Towards the empty beach —
And don't go near the water!

I ran, arms spread-out to feel the veils from my fingers, caused by wind. Today would be the last day here.
There are usually so many adults telling children what and how to do, that a boy has to run off down a beach to get by himself in his own world.
Being alone is so new when you're a child.
So now,
I was really alone.

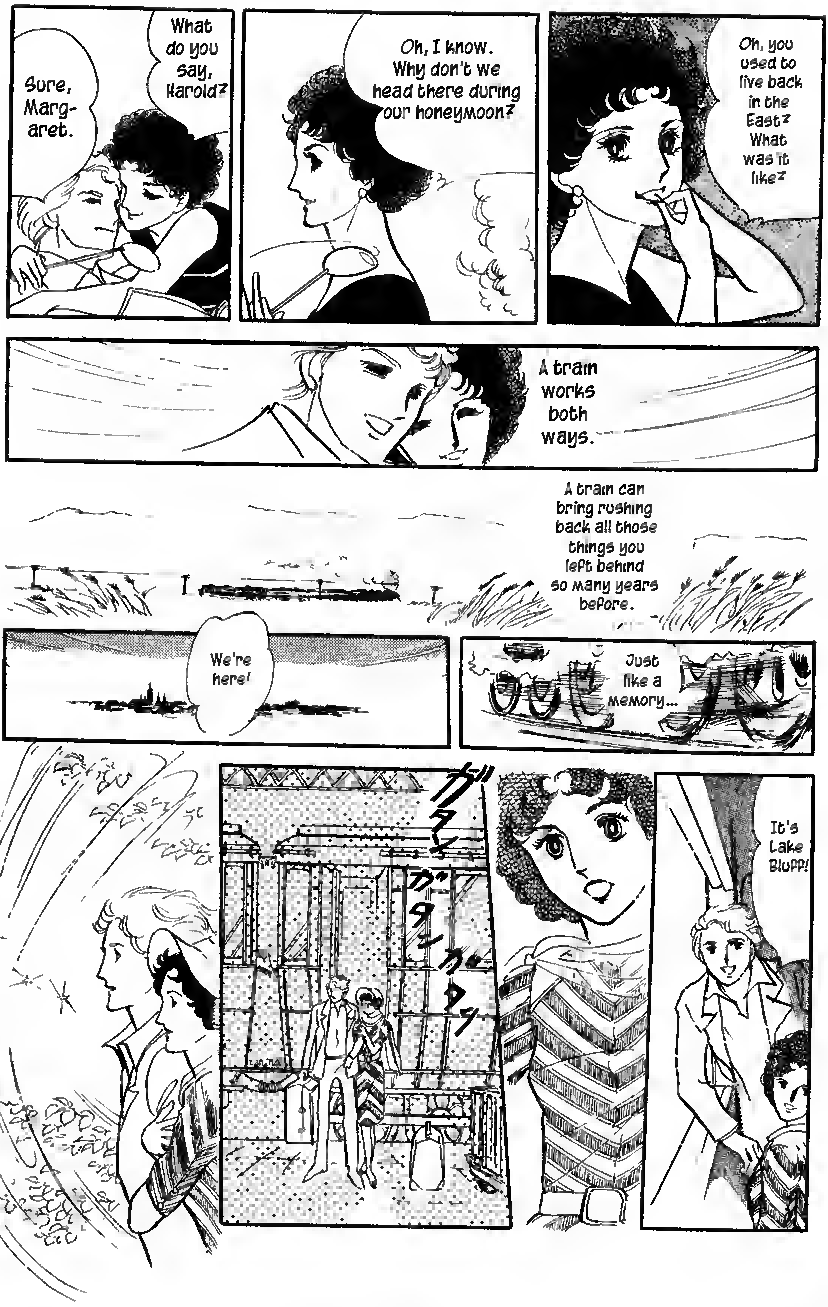

Tally...
Tally!
I'd never see her at class again,
Tally!
Tally!
Tally!
Tally!
Tally!
Her blonde hair carried the same scent as May itself.
Nor play ball with her.

Kyaaaaa!
Where did the girl with the beautiful smile I once knew disappear to?
And so that summer passed
Come back, Tally
But you were never to be found.
I remember the life-guards searching the entire lake.
Tally!
Tally, where are you?
I was only 12 but I know how much I loved her.
Won't you give my Tally back?
Mich-igan Lake!
Tally... Come back.
Please come back, Tally!

Tally would continue to be gone even after this fall.
All the long autumn days when I had carried her books home from school was now just a thing of the past.
And my family would move to the West tomorrow.
Just like the ones we used to build together...
Tally. I'll make a sand-castle in your memory.
Tally, if you hear me...
Come back and build the remaining half...


The next day, I went away on a train.
A train has a poor memory.
Until they drop behind the horizon.
It soon puts all behind it.

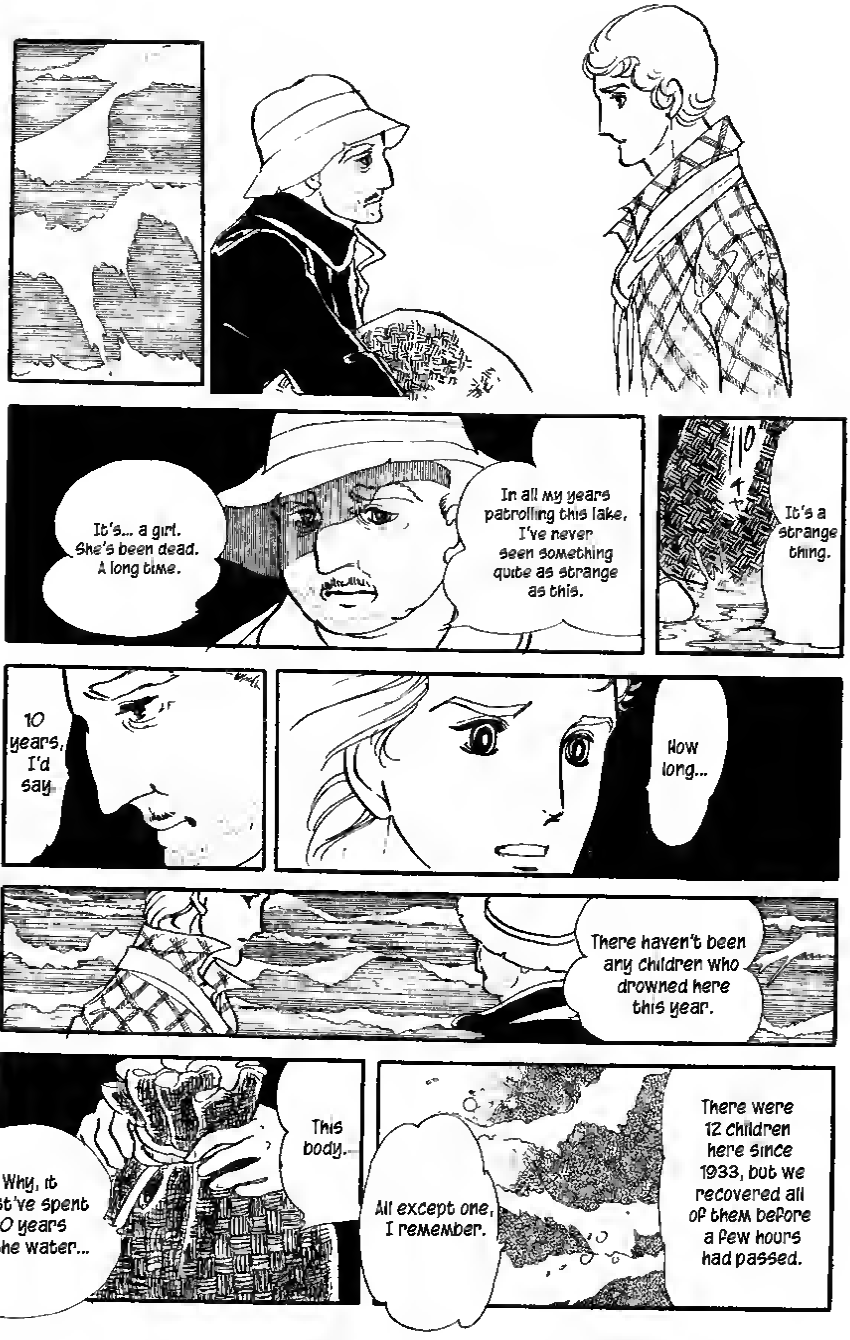
To middle school.
I lengthened my bones.
I shifted from grammar school
To high school.
I had forgotten all about the East.
And to college
And after some time, we were married.
I got to know a girl in Sacramento.

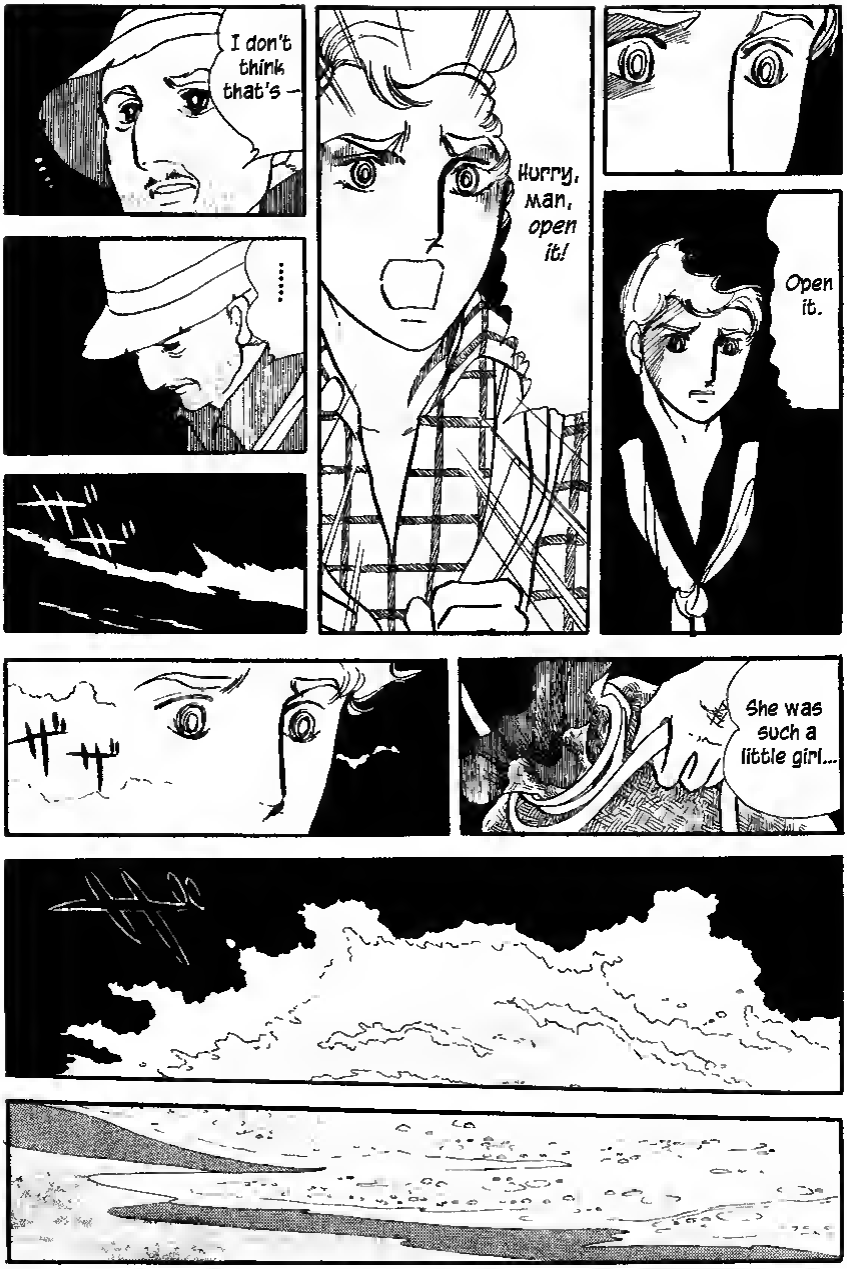

What do you say, Harold?
Sure, Margaret.
Oh, I know. Why don't we head there during our honeymoon?
Oh, you used to live back in the East? What was it like?
A train works both ways.
A train can bring rushing back all those things you left behind so many years before.
We're here!
Just like a memory...
It's Lake Bluff!

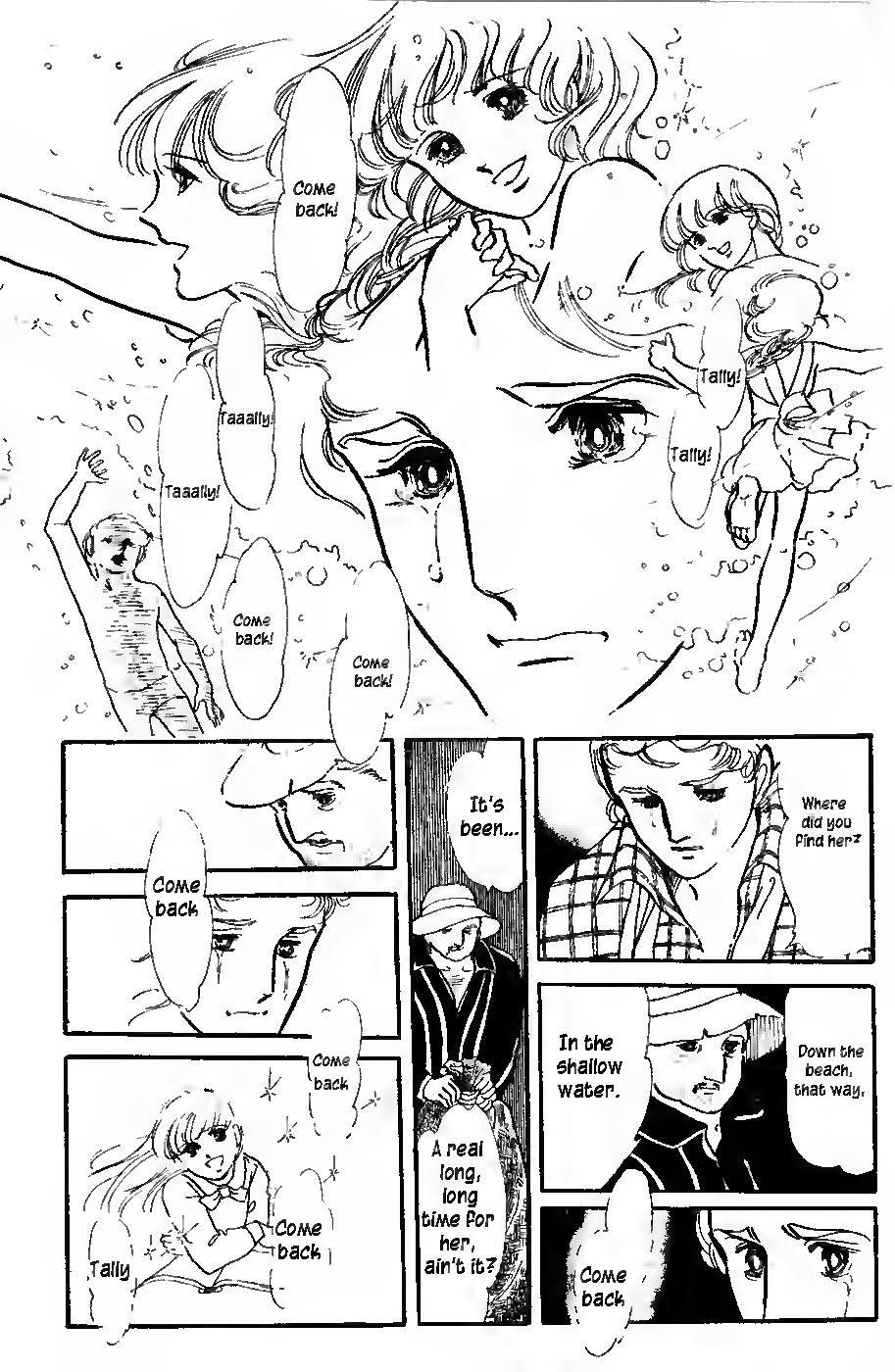
I felt my old world gather me back into its living.
There were echoes in the passerby s faces and streets.
Reverb-erating all around me
With summer just about over, we're set to return to the West tomorrow
It's nice to spend our last day here out on the beach
At least I thought I did
We stayed two weeks in all The days were happy and I loved Margaret well
Mame?!

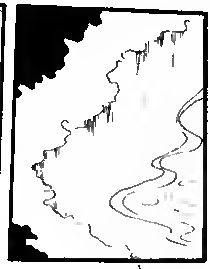
The wind, waited there to sing for us.
It was then I sensed something quietly approaching.

Stay here, Margaret.
But, why?
What is it?


It's... a girl. She's been dead. A long time.
In all my years patrolling this lake, I've never seen something quite as strange as this.
It's a strange thing.
10 years, I'd say.
How long...
There haven't been any children who drowned here this year.
This body...
Why, it must've spent 10 years in the water...
All except one, I remember.
There were 12 children here since 1933, but we recovered all of them before a few hours had passed.

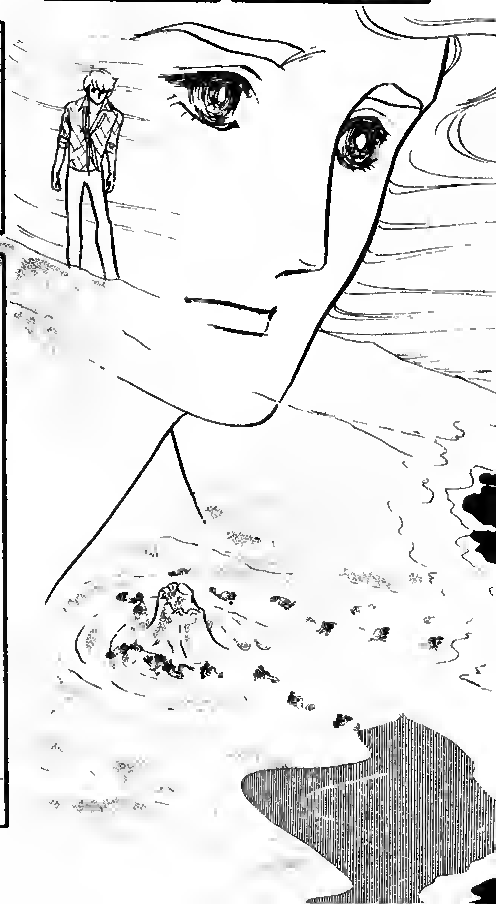

I don't think that's
Hurry, man, open it!
Open it.
.....
She was such a little girl...


Come back!
Taaally!
Taaally!
Come back!
Come back!
Tally!
Tally!
Come back
Come back
Come back
Come back
Tally
It's been...
A real long, long time for her, ain't it?
Where did you find her?
In the shallow water.
Down the beach, that way.
Come back



The sand-castle.

Just like the one we used to build. She half and I half.



Will Forever love you...
I, too,
And Forever unchanging, Tally...
Forever Young.
And going back out to the lake again and not ever returning
Tally
coming in
from
The lake
The little prints of feet,

My eternal love.
Tally!
Tally!
I'll love you forever.
Tally!
Tally!
Kamei Magaret was waiting for me...
Where a strange woman
I now walked back up the beach,

# Come into My Cellar

Yawwn...
Saturday
A beautiful day out today
Morning, Mrs Goodbody!
You're looking lively as always
Oh... hello Mary
Cough!
Eccentric as ever, that Mrs. Goodbody
Special Delivery!
Coming!
What kind this time?
Hard to enjoy such a nice day with these fiends and pests to watch for!
You best take care, you hear?
I don't want to shout it to the jaybirds, but... The flying saucers are invading.
There, take that!

What's all this ruckus in the morning?
Give it! Give it!
What's even in this thing?
Ah! Tom! Huey!
Woohoo!
That's for us! We ordered it!
Our package is here! Our package is here!
It's ours!
Sorry auntie, I just wanted to tease the boys a little, that's all.
Mary! You're already 17 so act your age!
We even bought it with our allowance!
Oh you kids and your novelty items
Can we grow it in the cellar where it's dark? Can we, can we?
We never asked for airmail. The company who sent the package decided that on their own
You asked for airmail special delivery for some mushrooms?
The Sylvan Glade Jumbo-Giant Guaranteed Growth Raise-Them-in-Your-Cellar-For-Big-Profit Mushrooms!
What is it, boys?
Sure, sure Happy harvesting, Farmers!
They really do grow big in just a single day!
It's not a novelty item!

Eggs,
Bacon,
Cigarettes for dad...
Roger!
Roger, is that you?
Mary...
Were you busy playing around with those Petri dishes at the lab again?
You've forgotten all about your girlfr... What's wrong, Roger?
Mary!
I've been meaning to talk to you about something!
Mary!
Absent-minded like usual, bookworm?

Then what's the worry?
No, they all seem to be their usual selves.
Why, how's your family doing?
Are you alright? How're things with you and your family? Nothing out of the ordinary or—?
We're fine.
There's something strange — something unseen — is happening. Haven't you noticed something wrong with the world lately?
Mary, listen to me carefully.
I'm talking about something on a whole 'nother level here!
No, that's not what I mean!
Hasn't there always been?

What's going on? Is the world ending or something? Or did you just have a vivid nightmare?
No, it's... hard to explain..
No, that's not it. Or at least that's not what my instincts say..
Umm, well... Mrs. Goodbody was going on about flying saucers this morning.
I don't even quite know myself. It's like when you notice your hands are dirty but you don't know how they got that way.
Dust falls on you every day and you don't feel it.
But when you get enough dust collected up, there it is, there you notice it all of a sudden.
All I know right now is that there's a lot of dust..
What exactly is this "dust" you've noticed?
I know I've got no real evidence,
But I've got a real bad feeling...
I.. I don't know for certain but I know it's *something*..!

You think it's just me who's lost it?
Maybe you're just overworked then?
I'm not! I even went to go see a doctor!
If you're feeling ill, maybe you're just sick?
Nghh
No, but you know how your mind can play tricks on you when you get real tired and stressed out. You should just try to relax...
Be careful.
Fine, but.. How can I help?
Mary
But if there's one thing I'm certain about, it's that there's something to worry about!
I know I haven't got a clue what or why I'm worried.
We've gotta make full use of our brains, like calling forth our 6th sense or something! Just hear more, feel more, smell more, taste more, see more for a little while. We've gotta get to the bottom of this!
Just watch everything for a few days.
I can sense it everywhere I go! You've gotta help me!

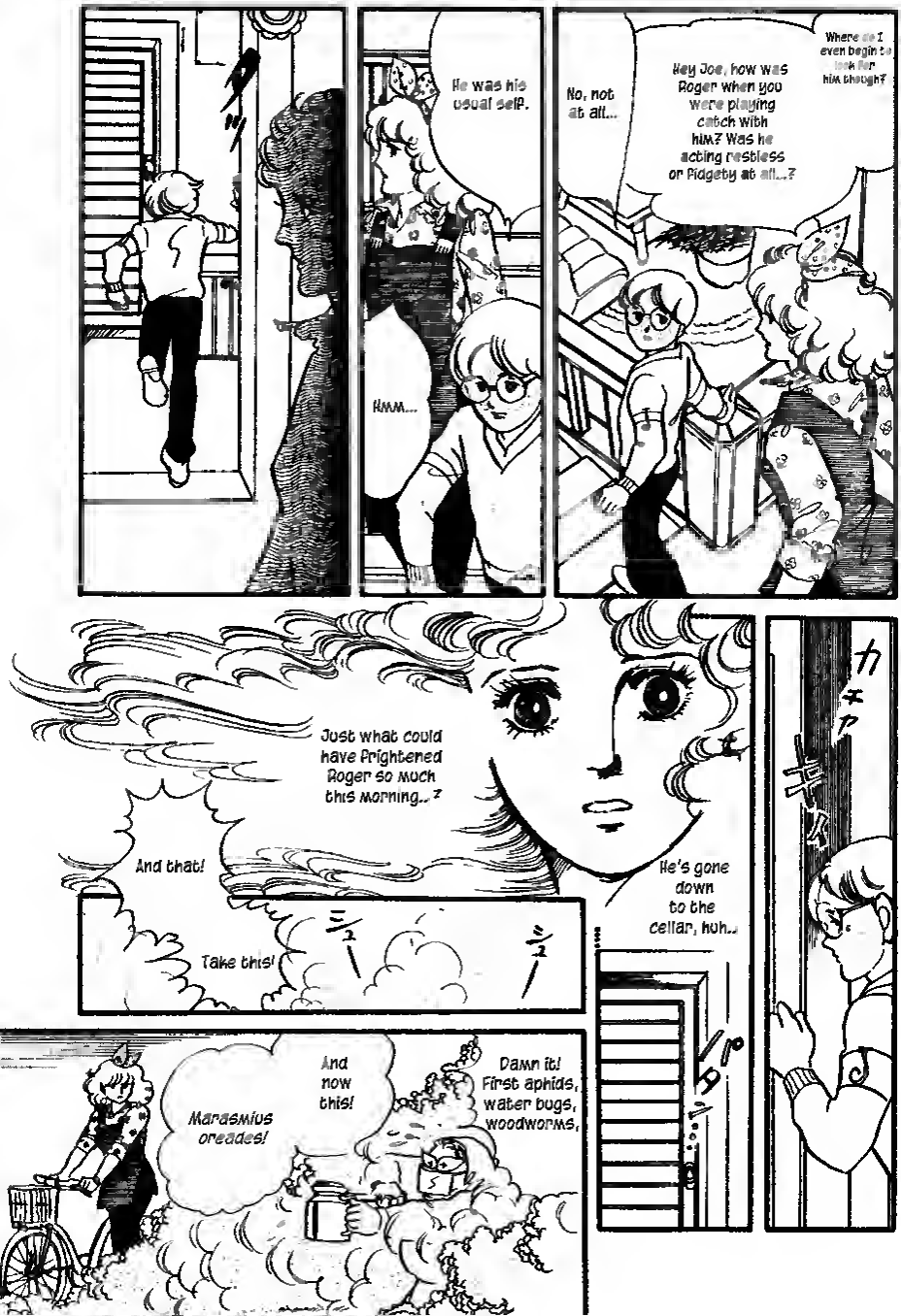
I just hope we can find out in time... Because if we don't...
It's all over for us!
Oh, Roger.
Why do you have to go and worry about the whole world on such a nice Saturday morning?

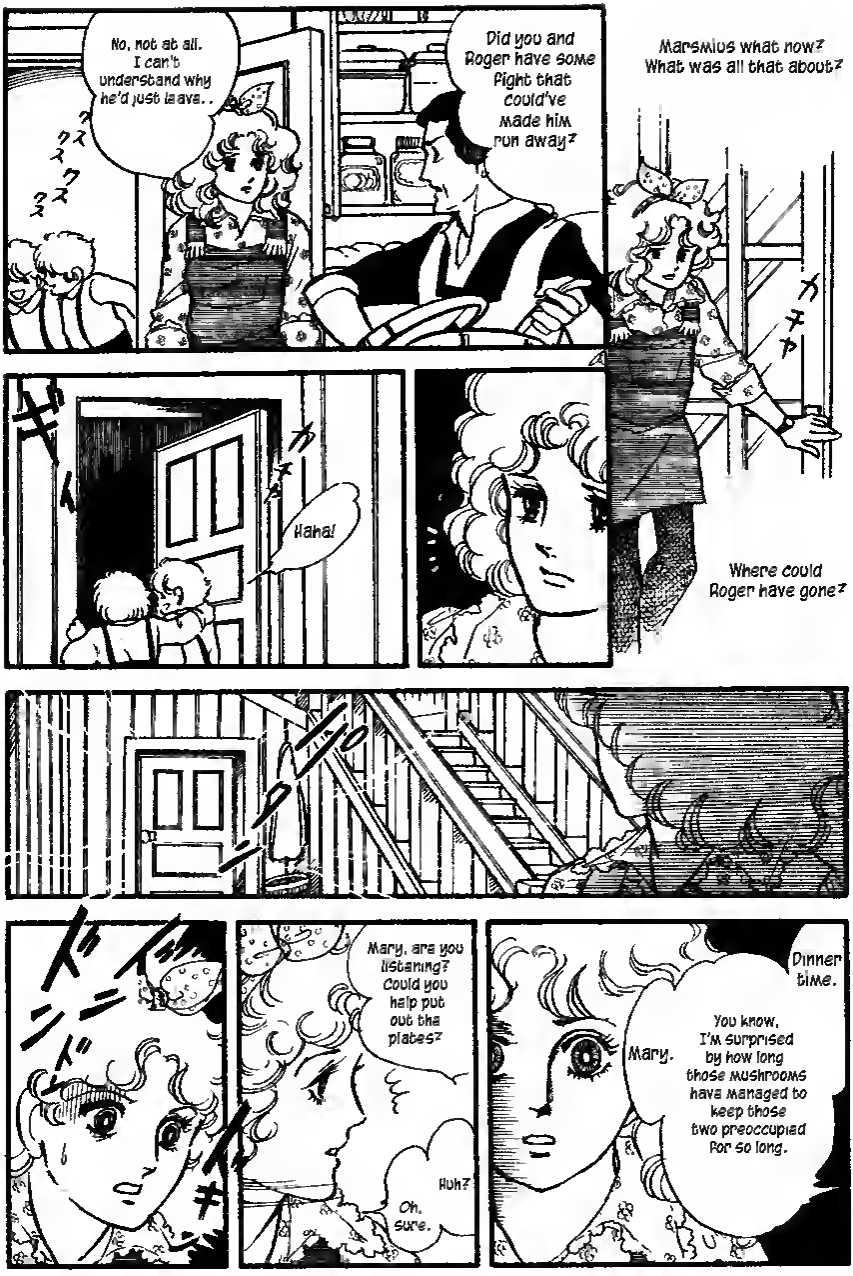
I met Roger on my way back from the store.
You mean that weird boy who went on about atomic symbols during your date?
I've known him since primary school, but I have to say, he was acting especially strange today...

Huey!
Tom!
Auntie... How's everything with you these days? Have you sensed any earthquakes or premonitions of war?
If it's war you're talking about, then I'll have you know I'M fighting one everyday against those twins!
We gave them some water and they already grew this much!
Look! Look! It's amazing!
Yeah, and we can even eat them after!
Yeah, and they're gonna grow much bigger!
These are the mushrooms you ordered?
Oh wow, they look just like itty bitty pins!
Yes, let's.
Let me see...
Well?
Of course not!
These aren't... Poisonous, are they?

Hello?
You big dummy!
You'll see when we eat them!
Yeah!
Hmm, I wonder..
Hmph, let's get back to the cellar, Tom!
Yeah, sis never believes us about anything!
Oh hi, Mary. This is Willis, Roger's father speaking.
This is Mary Fortnum.
Mary,
He ran away?!
What!?
Something Strange-
Be carePul-
A lot of dust,
Around us...
Hoh? No, he's not here. Why, did something happen to Roger?
Would Roger happen to be at your home right now?
I think he may have ran away from home.
Well, he's.. gone. Even all his clothes have disappeared from his closet.

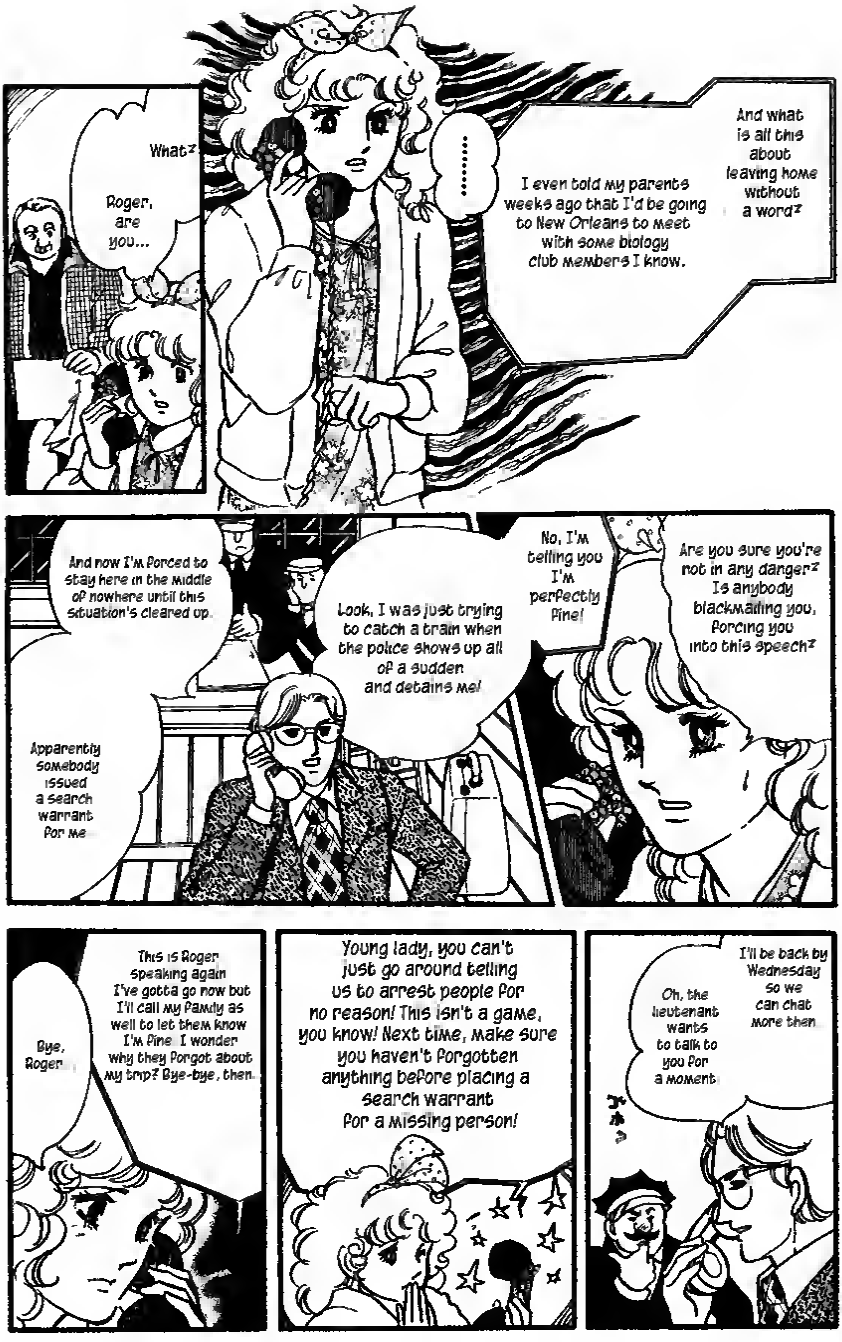
It was taking him an awfully long time to come back so when I went inside to check he was just gone along with his clothes!
He said he had to go inside for a minute but...
You're right! Not a single shirt left! But why...
He was here just a little while ago.
We were playing catch out front in the yard
I don't know... He's always been so kind and cheerful..
Was there some possible reason why Roger would do such a thing?
Yes, I'll try my best to find him too...
I've already asked the police to see if he might show up at nearby stations or airports but could you...
Thank you
Oh, this is just terrible!
No, somehow bad people must have snuck into our house and stole him away right under our noses!
No, I don't think he would've calmly went inside to pack his clothes if that were the case.
Mary! Do you think it's possible he was kidnapped?


He was his usual self.
Hmm...
No, not at all...
Hey Joe, how was Roger when you were playing catch with him? Was he acting restless or fidgety at all...?
Where do I even begin to look for him though?
カチャ
He's gone down to the cellar, huh..
Just what could have frightened Roger so much this morning...?
And that!
Take this!
Damn it! First aphids, water bugs, woodworms,
And now this!
Marasmius oreades!


No, not at all. I can't understand why he'd just leave...
Did you and Roger have some fight that could've made him run away?
Marsmius what now? What was all that about?
Where could Roger have gone?
Haha!
Dinner time.
Mary.
You know, I'm surprised by how long those mushrooms have managed to keep those two preoccupied for so long.
Mary, are you listening? Could you help put out the plates?
Huh?
Oh, sure.

For me?
It's for you, Mary
Telegram for Ms. Fortnum!
I'll never understand that boy... Hurry up and go call the police.
It's from Roger! He said he's headed for New Orleans!
Did they find him?
Traveling New Orleans This telegram sent at possible off-guard moment. You must refuse, repeat, refuse, all special-delivery packages. --Roger-
Roger!?
Refuse all special-delivery packages
Possible off-guard moment

Roger?
Mary?
Roger, is that you? Where are you right now!?
I never sent a telegram!
Telegram?
The one about you going to New Orleans.
What're you talking about? You're the one who suddenly ran away from home without saying a word...
Where am I? I'm at the police station because of you! Are you playing some sort of prank on me?
Roger, I'm just as confused as you are. Are you sure you're alright? I received that telegram you sent.


What?
Roger, are you...
.....
I even told my parents weeks ago that I'd be going to New Orleans to meet with some biology club members I know.
And what is all this about leaving home without a word?
And now I'm forced to stay here in the middle of nowhere until this situation's cleared up.
Apparently somebody issued a search warrant for me.
Look, I was just trying to catch a train when the police shows up all of a sudden and detains me!
No, I'm telling you I'm perfectly fine!
Are you sure you're not in any danger? Is anybody blackmailing you, forcing you into this speech?
Bye, Roger.
This is Roger speaking again. I've gotta go now but I'll call my family as well to let them know I'm fine. I wonder why they forgot about my trip? Bye-bye, then.
Young lady, you can't just go around telling us to arrest people for no reason! This isn't a game, you know! Next time, make sure you haven't forgotten anything before placing a search warrant for a missing person!
Oh, the lieutenant wants to talk to you for a moment.
I'll be back by Wednesday so we can chat more then.

Good night, Cynthia
All this trouble for nothing! Well, I'm heading to bed now.
.....
No, he's not Pine at all
You should go to bed too now, Mary Let's just be glad Roger was Pine all along.
Traveling New Orleans
Something must've caused him to change his mind after sending it...
It had to have been Roger.
.....
Who could've sent the telegram and why?
Dad!
Refuse all special-delivery packages
I can't make sense of it at all...
Opp-Guard Moment? Whose?
This telegram sent at possible opp-guard moment
What, did you forget already? Tom and Huey got that package just this morning.
Did we get a special-delivery recently?

New Orleans, LA
This was the package...
ガガガガ
Wait, Tom and Huey were...
バタン
The postmark is New Orleans!?
But that's where Roger was headed!
Package... Package carrying mushrooms...
Mushrooms grown in the cellar... Cellar...

Has your home received any special-delivery packages recently?
I...
I just wanted to ask.
Pardon?
Yes he did I'm sorry for causing such a big fuss over nothing
Hello? This is Mary! Did your son Roger call you back?
No, it's Pine
Mushrooms.
The kind you can easily grow in a cellar.
What... what was in that package?
But why the sudden question?
It's something all the kids in the neighbourhood have been crazy about.
Ah yes, we did 3 days ago, in fact.
special-delivery?
Umm

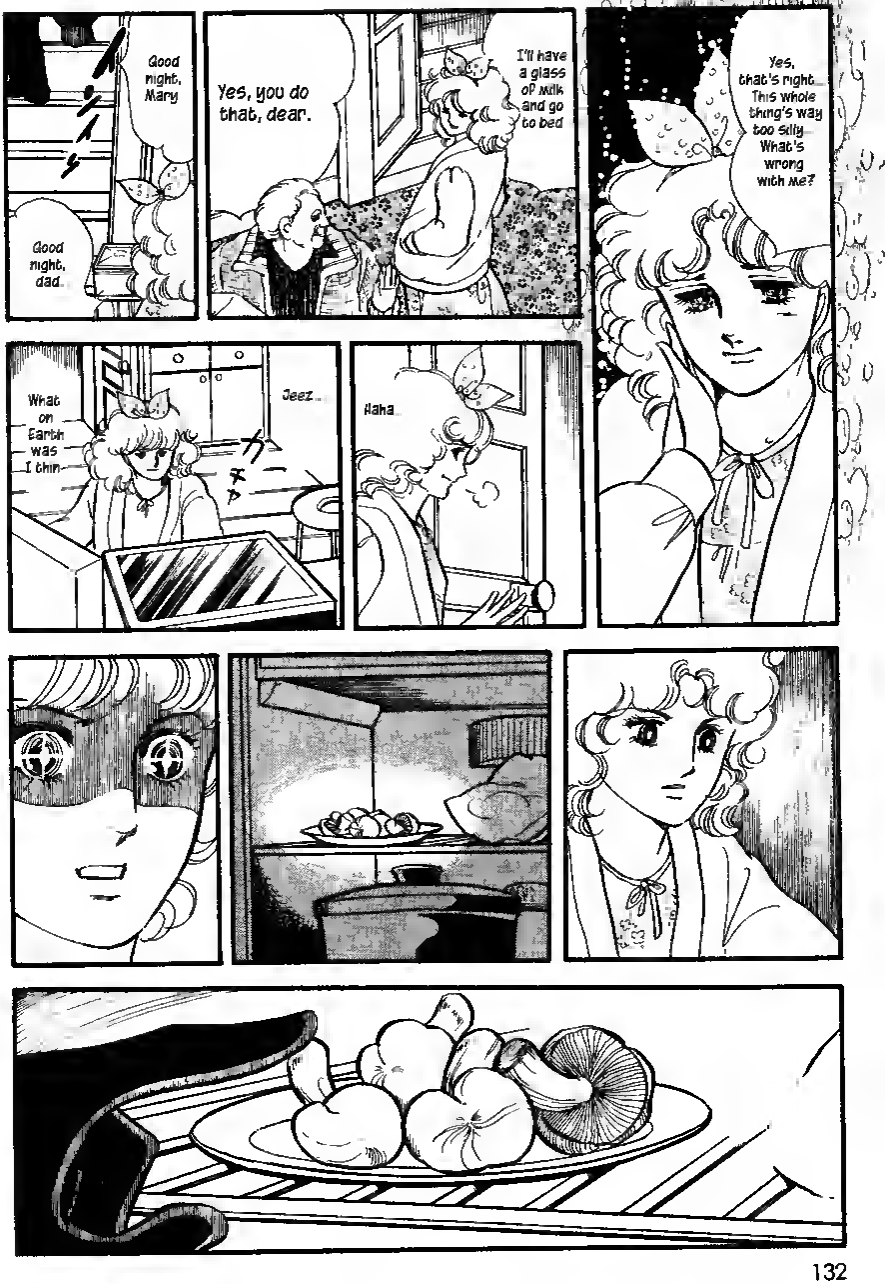
I'm perfectly fine!
Mushrooms...
Mushrooms...
Refuse all special-delivery packages!
A package from New Orleans
I don't know for certain...
but I know it's something...!
What was that Mrs. Goodbody mentioned?
The flying saucers are invading!
And now this!
Marasmius oreades!
Take this!

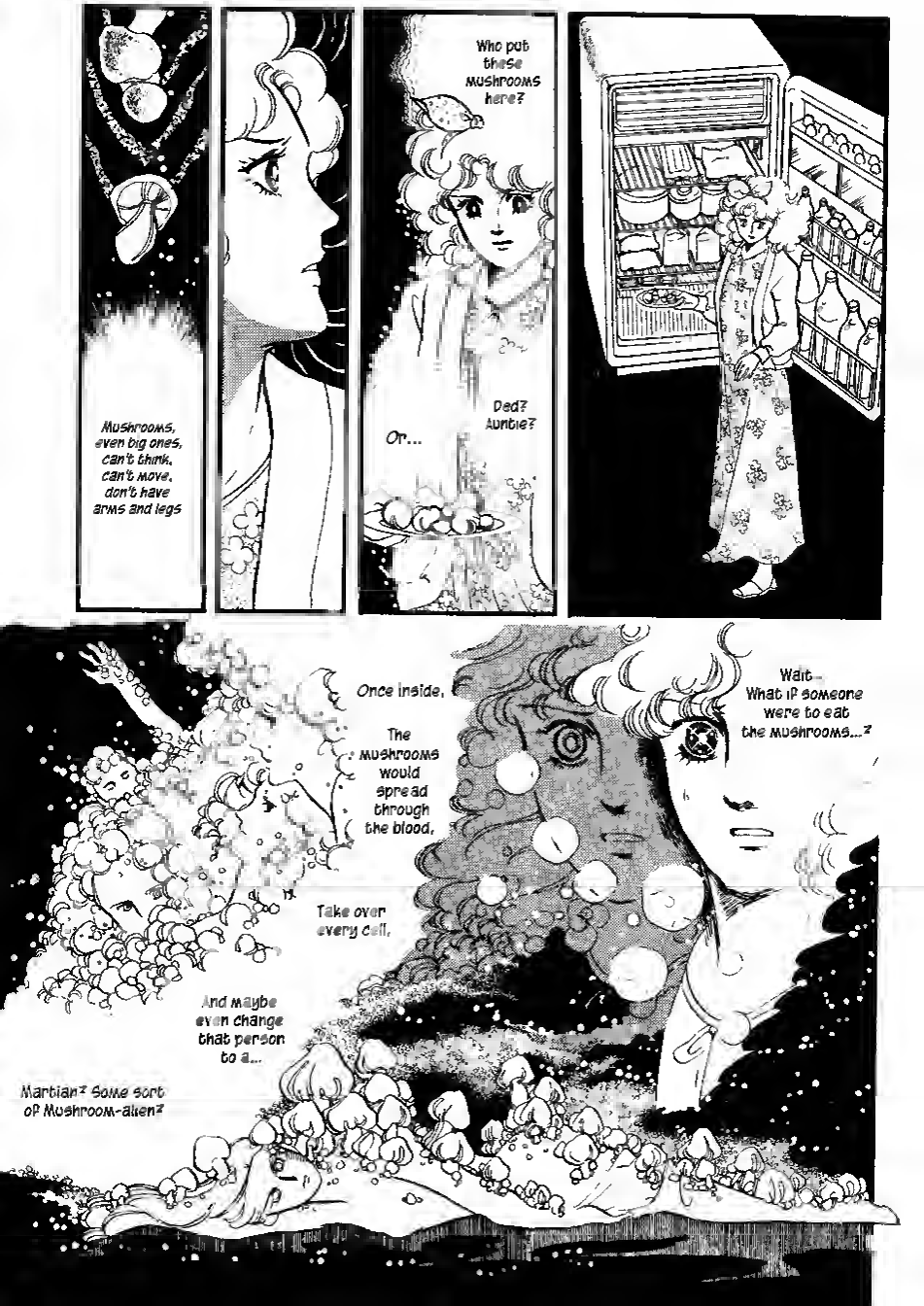
Mushroom...
Marasmius oreades.
A mushroom that commonly grows on lawns during summer and fall.
Marasmius...
Dad.
What's wrong, Mary? Still worried about Roger?
I just... Feel very uneasy... As if something terrible is happening...
No, it's not just that...
Be careful, Mary.

No, it's not something that we could easily see with our eyes.
Haha, don't worry. If that were the case, our radars could easily detect them like in one of 'em science-fiction stories!
What, like flying saucers?
Like...Maybe the Earth is being invaded by things from other worlds...
What if these things were smaller?
Like spores, seeds, pollen, bacteria, or viruses!
These things probably bombard our atmosphere...
By the billions every second,
And have done so for millions of years.
Right now,
We're sitting out under an invisible rain. It falls all over the country,
Our lawn
The cities, the towns, and right now...
Right now,
Our lawn?

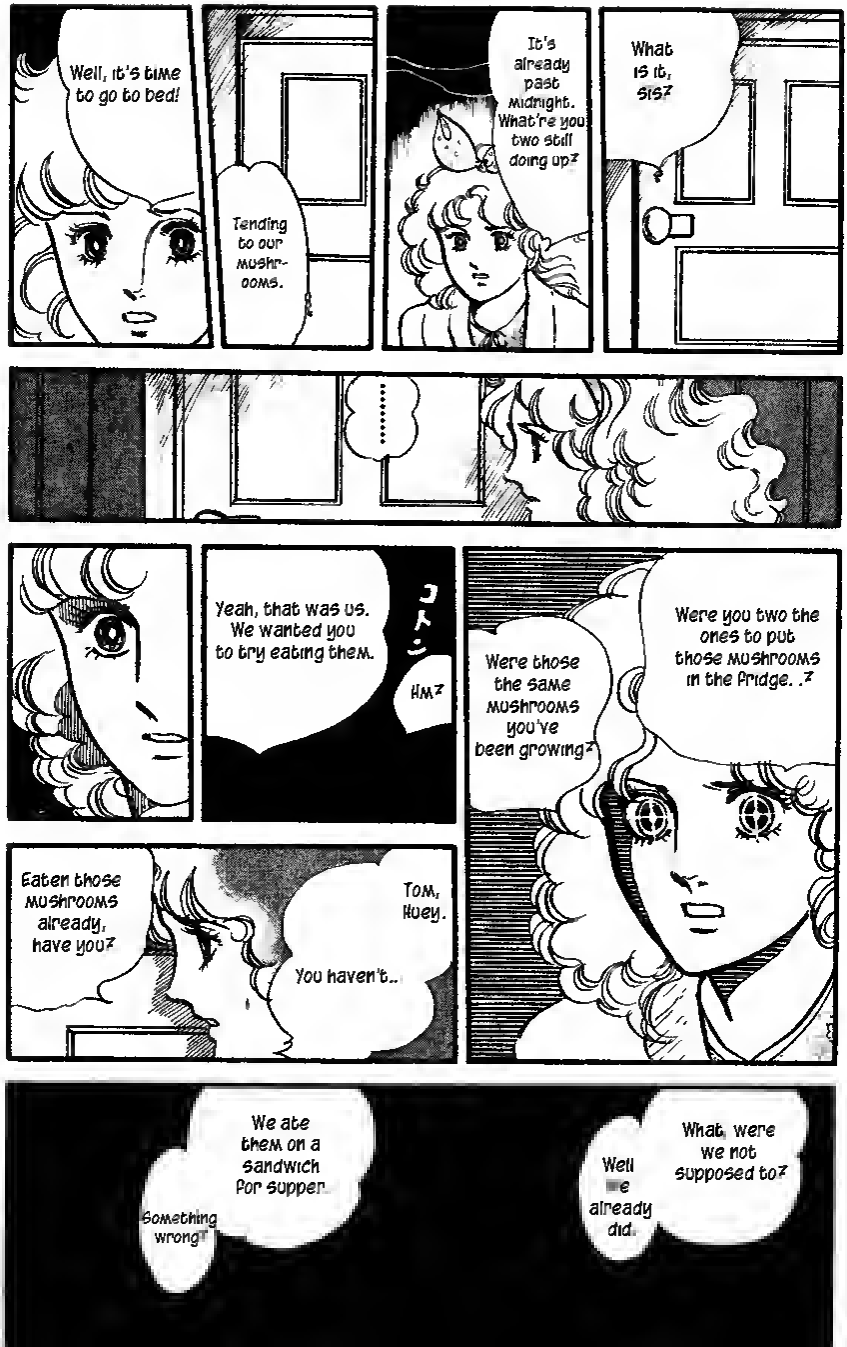
Like Alabama, Georgia, or Louisiana.
Best climate for them might be south.
Back in the damp bayous they could grow very big.
Yes.
But people like Mrs. Goodbody are always pulling weeds, spraying poison, and kicking toadstools off their grass.
Plus, it would be hard for any strange life form to survive in cities. Weather's a problem, too.
Is actually owned and operated by 6 foot tall mushrooms from another planet?
What're you trying to get at here? That this Great Bayou or Whatever Greenhouse Novelty Company that sent the boys their package
What possible reason could he have...
Mary.
And now Roger's travelling south all of a sudden .. Why?
Boys,
But even as we speak,
It's hilarious!
If you put it that way, it's funny
They're sending their money in by the thousands or millions to New Orleans.
To raise these mushrooms..
All across the country,
Are growing these mushrooms in their cellars.

Well?
In any case, you have to realize that this is all normal and there's nothing to worry about. Just think about it, Mary. Mushrooms, even big ones, can't think, can't move, don't have arms and legs. How could they run a mail-order service and "take over" the world?
Listen, Mary. When I was a little boy, I also mail-ordered all kinds of novelty toys and miscellaneous items.
Like chemistry kits or build-your-own-watch kits. It's just what boys do.
Haha...
Lurking in the cellar?
Come now. Instead of just worrying, Why don't we go take a look at these so-called terrible fiends and monsters of yours.
Mushrooms are just mushrooms!
No, no, I know what we'll find.
Sorry, this whole thing's silly. You win, dad.
Good


Good night, Mary
Good night, dad
Yes, you do that, dear.
I'll have a glass of milk and go to bed
Yes, that's right... This whole thing's way too silly. What's wrong with me?
What on Earth was I thin
Jeez
Haha

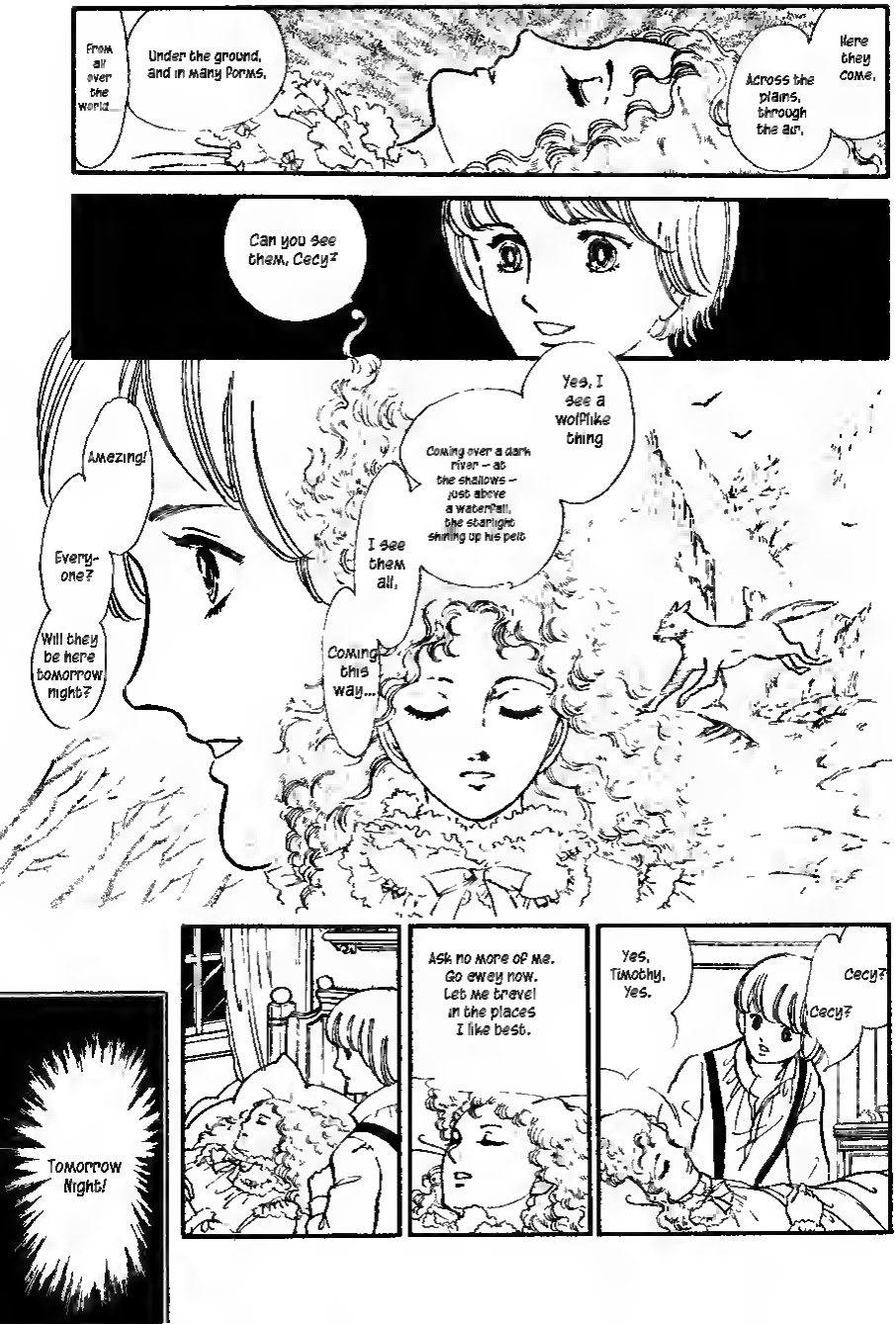

Mushrooms, even big ones, can't think, can't move, don't have arms and legs
Who put these mushrooms here?
Dad? Auntie?
Or...
Once inside,
The mushrooms would spread through the blood,
Take over every cell,
And maybe even change that person to a...
Martian? Some sort of Mushroom-alien?
Wait— What if someone were to eat the mushrooms...?

Roger must've eaten the mushrooms his little brother was growing.
And his own self kidnapped him!
But he regained his sanity for one second and sent that telegram to warn me!
Refuse all special-delivery packages!
I'm perfectly fine, Mary.
Then the Roger I talked to on the phone was actually.... No, it can't be...
Tom.
Huey!
Giggle giggle
Are you two still down there?


Well, it's time to go to bed!
Tending to our mushrooms.
It's already past midnight. What're you two still doing up?
What is it, sis?
.....
Yeah, that was us. We wanted you to try eating them.
コトン
Hm?
Were those the same mushrooms you've been growing?
Were you two the ones to put those mushrooms in the fridge..?
Eaten those mushrooms already, have you?
Tom, Huey.
You haven't..
What, were we not supposed to?
Well we already did.
We ate them on a sandwich for supper.
Something wrong?

Take a look at our harvests.
Sis, wanna come down?
C'mon, sis.
Wait...
Come down.
Don't turn on the light.
It's bad for the mushrooms
No, what am I being afraid for?
There's no way it could be true.
This whole thing's ridiculous.

Come down with me...

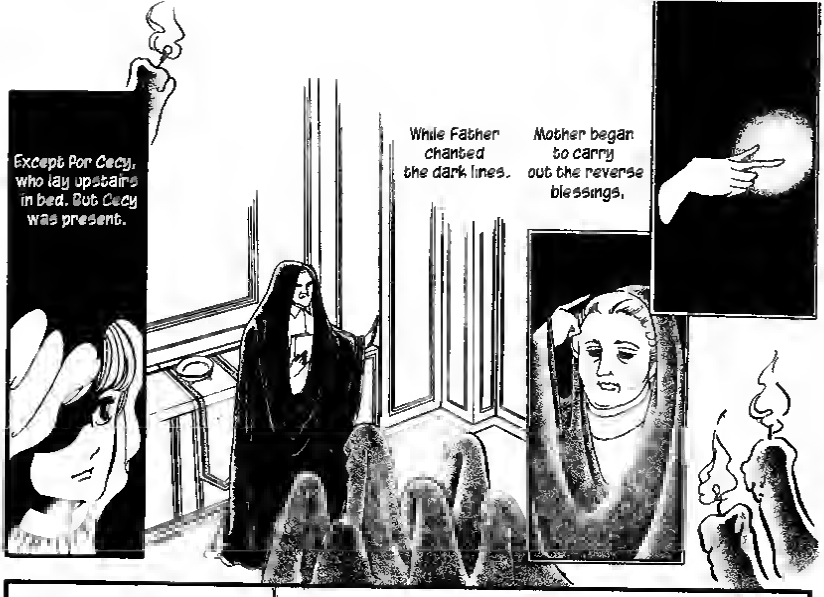

From all over the world...
Under the ground, and in many forms,
Here they come.
Across the plains, through the air,
Can you see them, Cecy?
Yes, I see a wolflike thing
Coming over a dark river -- at the shallows -- just above a waterfall, the starlight shining up his pelt
I see them all,
Coming this way...
Amazing!
Every-one?
Will they be here tomorrow night?
Ask no more of me. Go away now. Let me travel in the places I like best.
Yes, Timothy, yes.
Cecy?
Cecy?
Tomorrow Night!

Everyone will come here for the homecoming,
Because tomorrow night is Allhallows Eve!

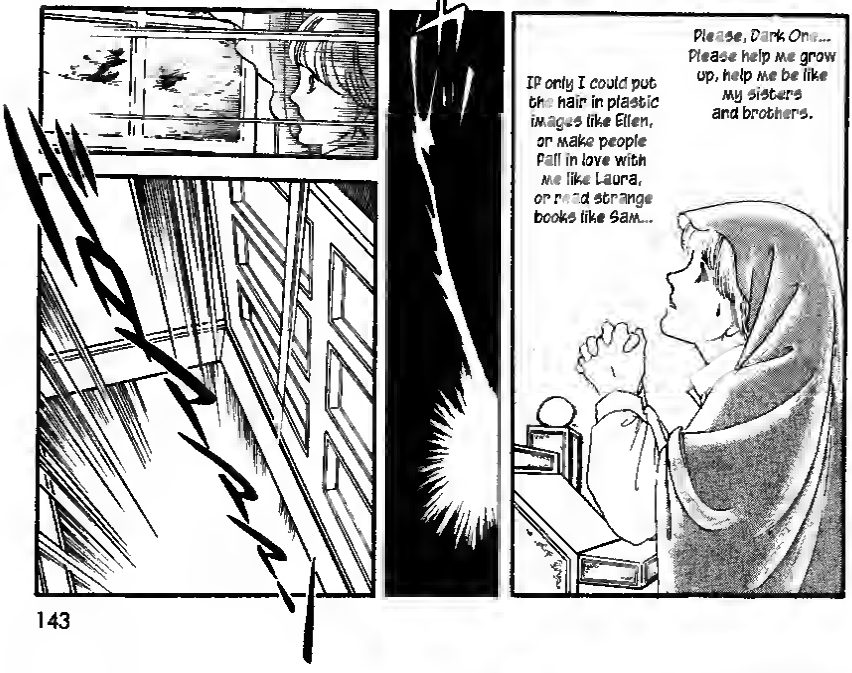
# Homecoming

Move it, move it!
……!
Those are very beautiful nails, Ellen
Go away. I can't work with you gawking.
What're you standing in my way for, Timmy? Can't you see I'm very busy!?
Busy, busy, busy!
Oh, there's just so many things to do!
Move that there!
Bring that here!
It's almost homecoming!
Everyone'll be here soon!
Geez, you sure do talk a lot.
Uncle Einar's a big man, isn't he, Papa? How big is he? 7 feet tall?
Timothy! I need you to polish this now!
Our guests will be sleeping in it so be sure to polish it until it's shining!

Hey there, Spid. Guess you're the only friend I've got here
Everyone's so busy with getting the place prepared in time...
Here, I brought a fly for you.
Everyone's coming for Allhallows Eve!
Timothy, go out and pick the poison mushrooms!
None of them have the slightest idea of the homecoming we're about to have.
The people in the town over there must all be asleep by now...
I can't even get used to sleeping during daytime like the others...
Spid, I'm no good... Everyone's so different from me...


Except for Cecy, who lay upstairs in bed. But Cecy was present.
While Father chanted the dark lines.
Mother began to carry out the reverse blessings.

And then I felt a movement and now she was in me, fleetingly, before disappearing.
I could see her peering, now from Bion's eyes, now Muriel's, now Mother's,


If only I could put the hair in plastic images like Ellen, or make people fall in love with me like Laura, or read strange books like Sam...
Please, Dark One... Please help me grow up, help me be like my sisters and brothers.

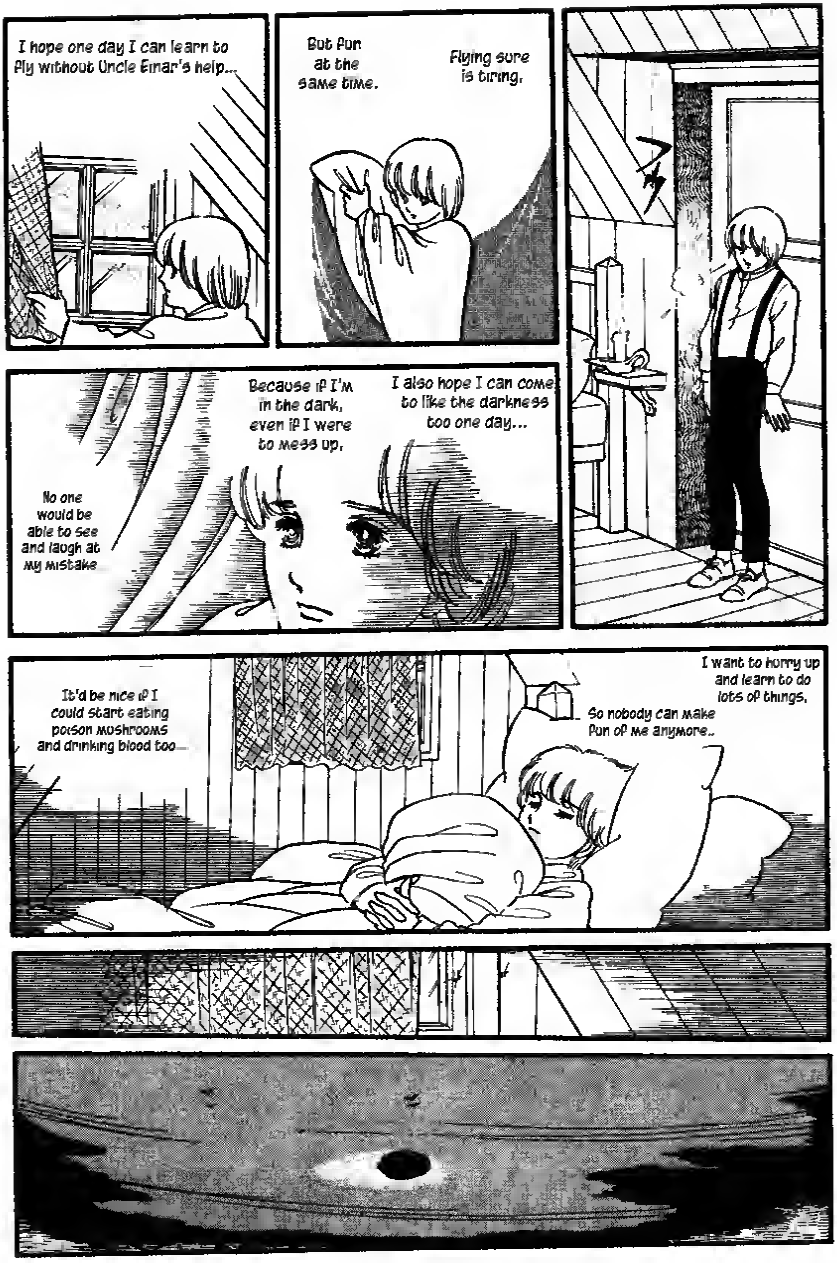
Am I right?
And you must be Timothy.
Oh!
Ha ha,
You've grown up to be a splendid boy!
Now then, come this way, Jason
Timothy, this is your uncle, Jason.
Good evening,
Every-body!
Welcome!
Hello there, Williams!
Nice to see you again, Helga!
Vivian!
Good evening!
It's been so long!
Come in, come in!
Good evening to you, too!
Thank you for making the long trip here!
Did you fly over from Asia?

And Ellen here gathers hair, nails, and claws for cosmetics!
They happen to operate the undertaking establishment in town!
My brothers and sisters are all very clever!
Oh, Aunt Morgiana!
Oh my, we're going to run out of wolfsbane at this rate!
Come in and relax with some tea!
And he's scared of the dark too!
That boy doesn't even like blood!
Of course, the lone exception is Timothy!
And then they never get a taste for things...
It's my fault, really. I tried forcing him. You can't force children, you only make them sick.
There's still time for him to come around.
Oh, he's still just a boy.
Yes...

It's Uncle Einar!
Ah!
Hello there, Timothy. How've you been?
Uncle Einar!
AHHH!
You should give flying a shot too! Come on, then!

Uncle-
Wings!
Fly with wings!
Fly, Timothy!
You have wings, fly!
Ah..
Ah!
Ah!
This is...
This is...!
I feel so light! As light as the wind itself!
It feels like I've really sprouted wings!

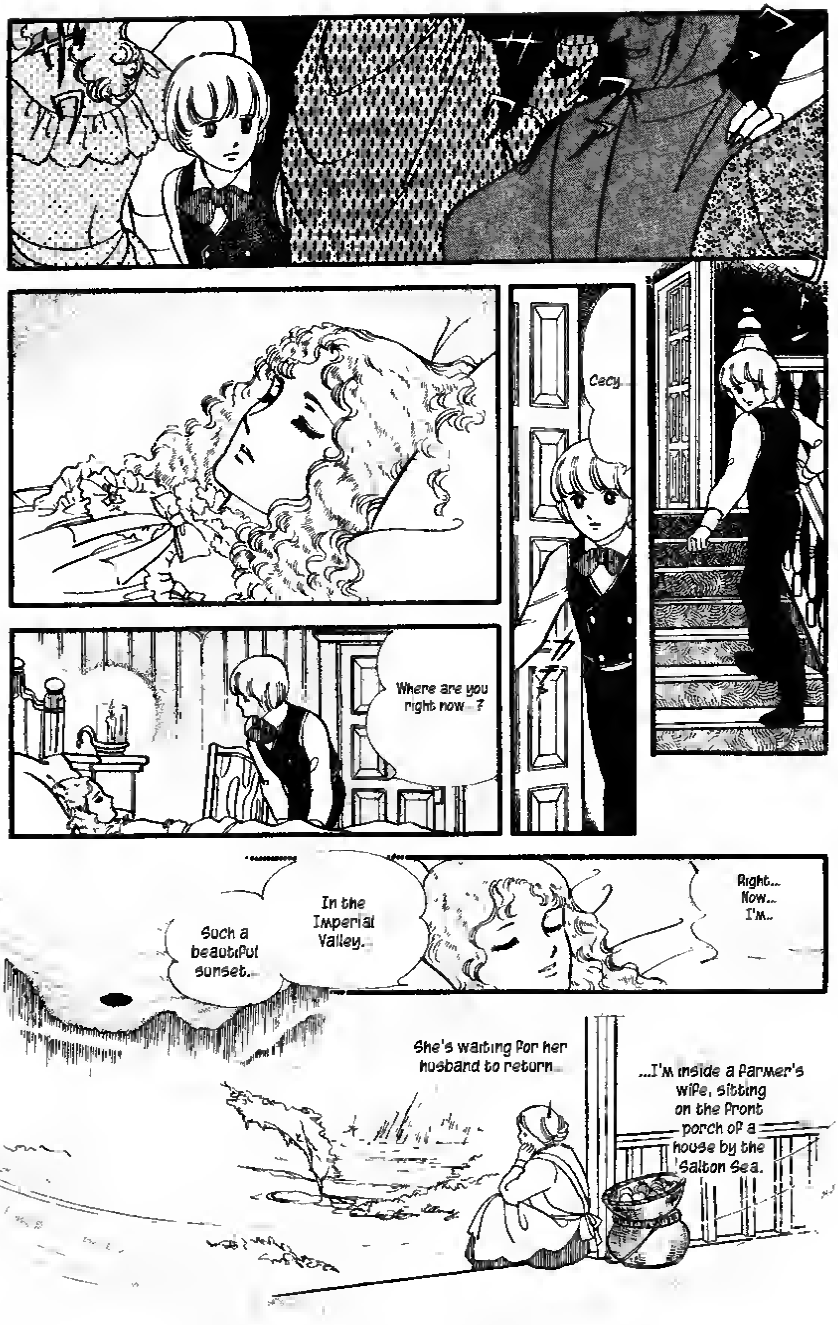
Was flying fun, Timothy?
はあはあ
Oh, Uncle Emar!
Uncle, uncle, uncle!
There, there. I'm glad you enjoyed it. .
Well, it's almost daybreak.
Time to get some sleep until nighttime.
Look, the sun's about to rise already.
Let's head down to the cellar then.
Sleep tight, everyone...


I hope one day I can learn to fly without Uncle Einar's help...
But fun at the same time.
Flying sure is tiring.
Because if I'm in the dark, even if I were to mess up,
I also hope I can come to like the darkness too one day...
No one would be able to see and laugh at my mistake
It'd be nice if I could start eating poison mushrooms and drinking blood too...
I want to hurry up and learn to do lots of things,
So nobody can make fun of me anymore..

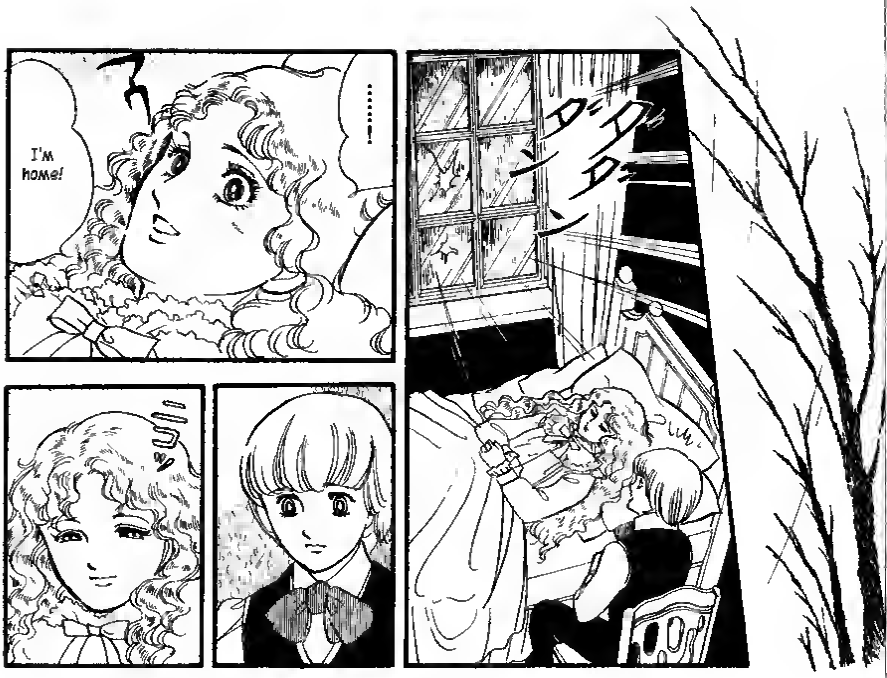
It's time to get this party started!
The moon's out!
It's night!
Tonight's Allhallows Eve!
So let's enjoy it to the fullest!
It's a grand ol' home-coming!
Dance and let lose!

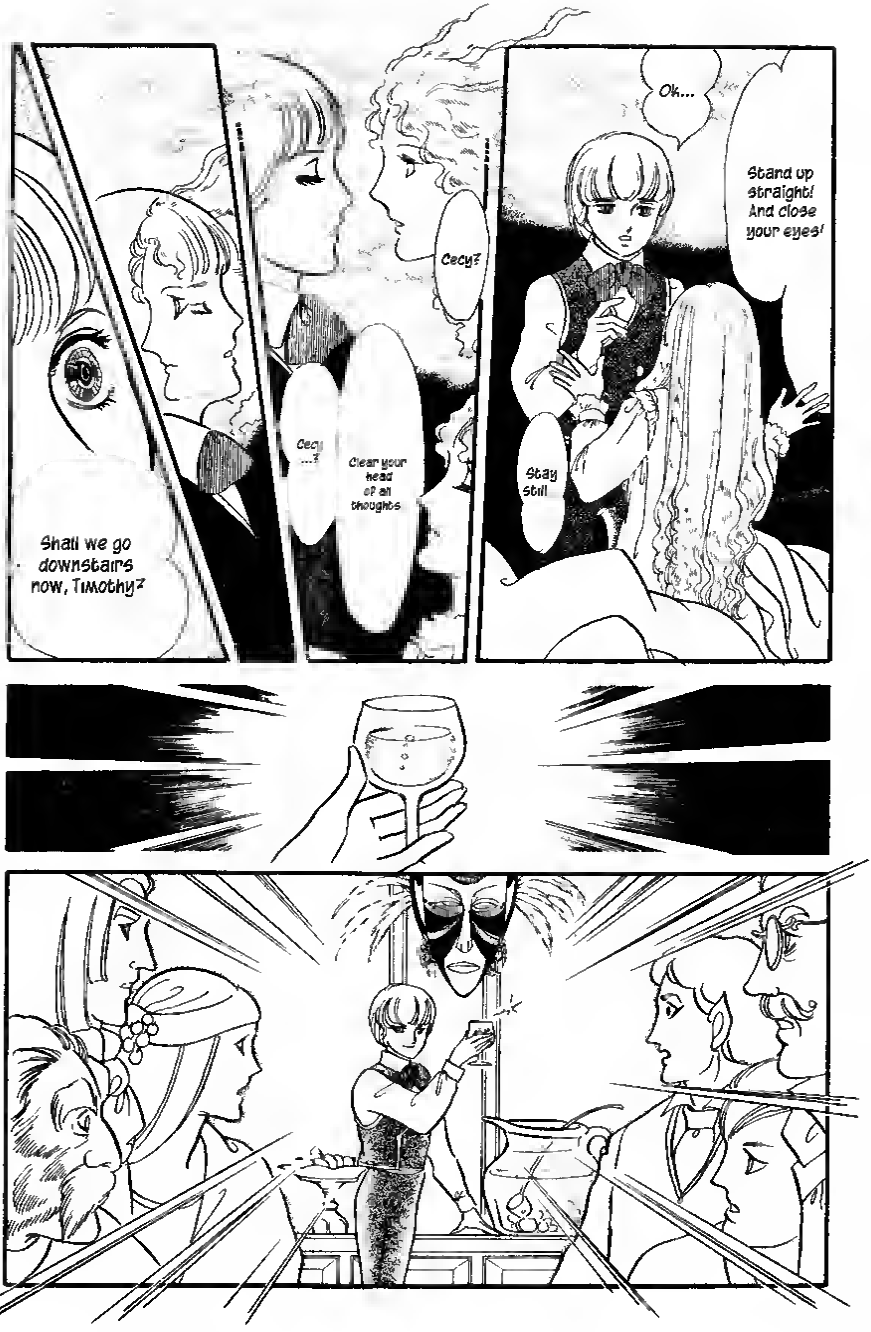
Ahh, it's a mouse!
You're late!
Welcome!
Did you come all the way from Europe?
No the festivities have only just begun!
Come in, come in!
Timothy, go hang our guest's jacket! Quickly!
Hey, I know this mouse!
So what if there's a mouse?!
Timothy! Come help me in the kitchen!
You're looking beautiful as always.
It's Niece Libers-router!
Good to see you, Libers-router!
c-coming

Bring that here.
And that.
Now this.
Quickly!
Ok.
Who's that crying outside the window?
Timothy, is the water boiling yet?
I can hear the wailing of the cemetery trees.


Cecy
Where are you right now...?
Such a beautiful sunset...
In the Imperial Valley...
Right... Now... I'm...
She's waiting for her husband to return...
...I'm inside a farmer's wife, sitting on the front porch of a house by the Salton Sea.

What're you planning to do?
Now walk!
Towards the mud-pots!
There's a strong smell of deep sulphurous burning.
An unpleasant smell.
What's it like?
I can make this woman move just like a puppet.
Haha
I'm going to change this woman's life.
Stand!
A bird!
I've now changed into the bird.
What about the woman?
She's still walking and...
Oh! there she goes!
She fell...
Right into the mud-pots!
Now fly!
I'll fly all the way back home!


I'm home!
.....!
The homecoming party's begun downstairs.
Then what're you doing upstairs for?
We'll go on then. Ask me what you came to ask.
.....
You know I'm no good at anything. I just...
I just want to do something that'll make them look at me in admiration for once.
Something to make me as good as them, something to make me belong, but there's nothing I can do and I feel funny and, well,
I thought you might...
I might...
Alright then.


Ok...
Stand up straight! And close your eyes!
Stay still
Cecy?
Cecy ...?
Clear your head of all thoughts
Shall we go downstairs now, Timothy?

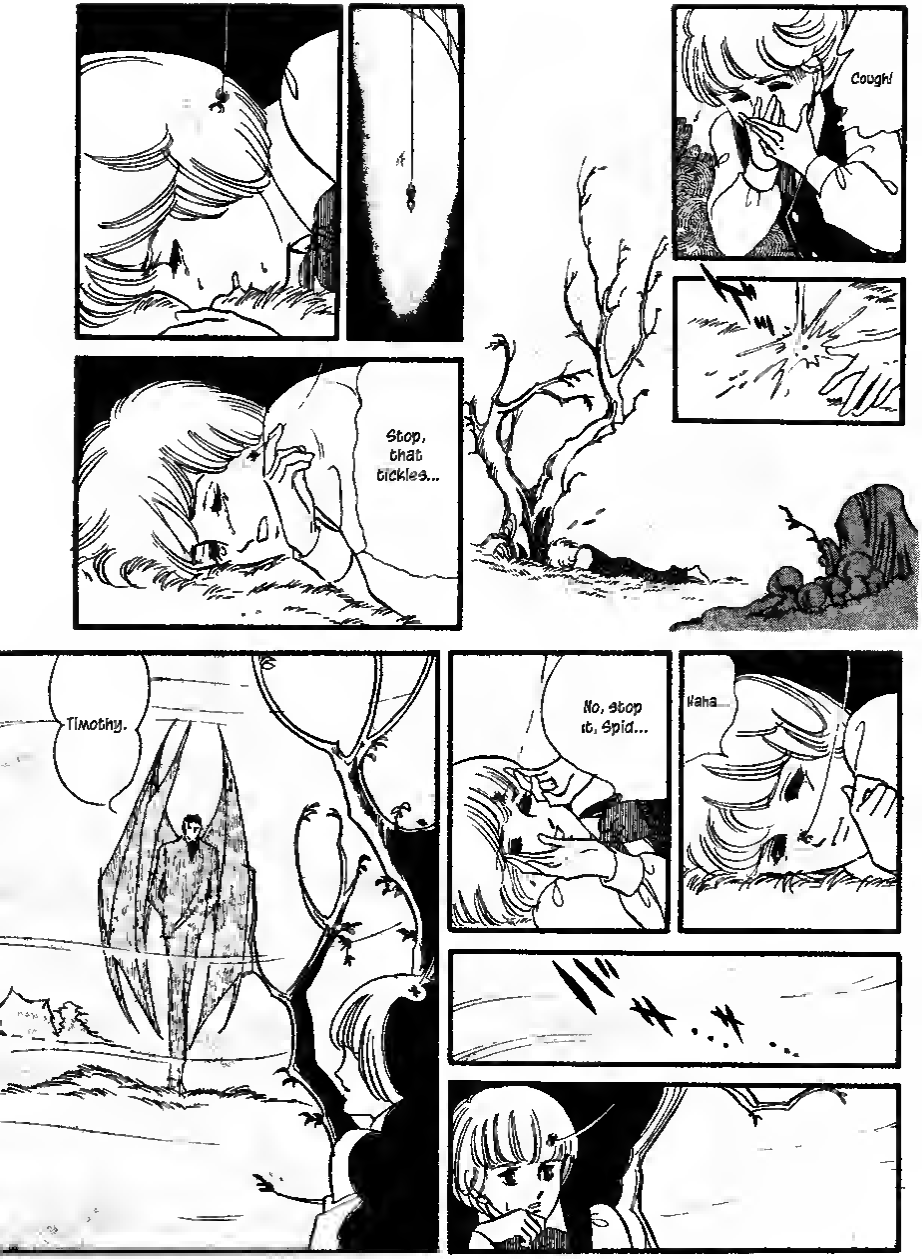
Everyone! Allow me to drink this glass of blood in hopes of all our family's good health!
Laura, my dear. What a lovely dress you're wearing tonight
I'm sure all the boys of the village are simply infatuated with you! As your younger brother, I couldn't be more proud of my lovely older sister!

Look!
Uncle Einar!
I can fly at last!
See!

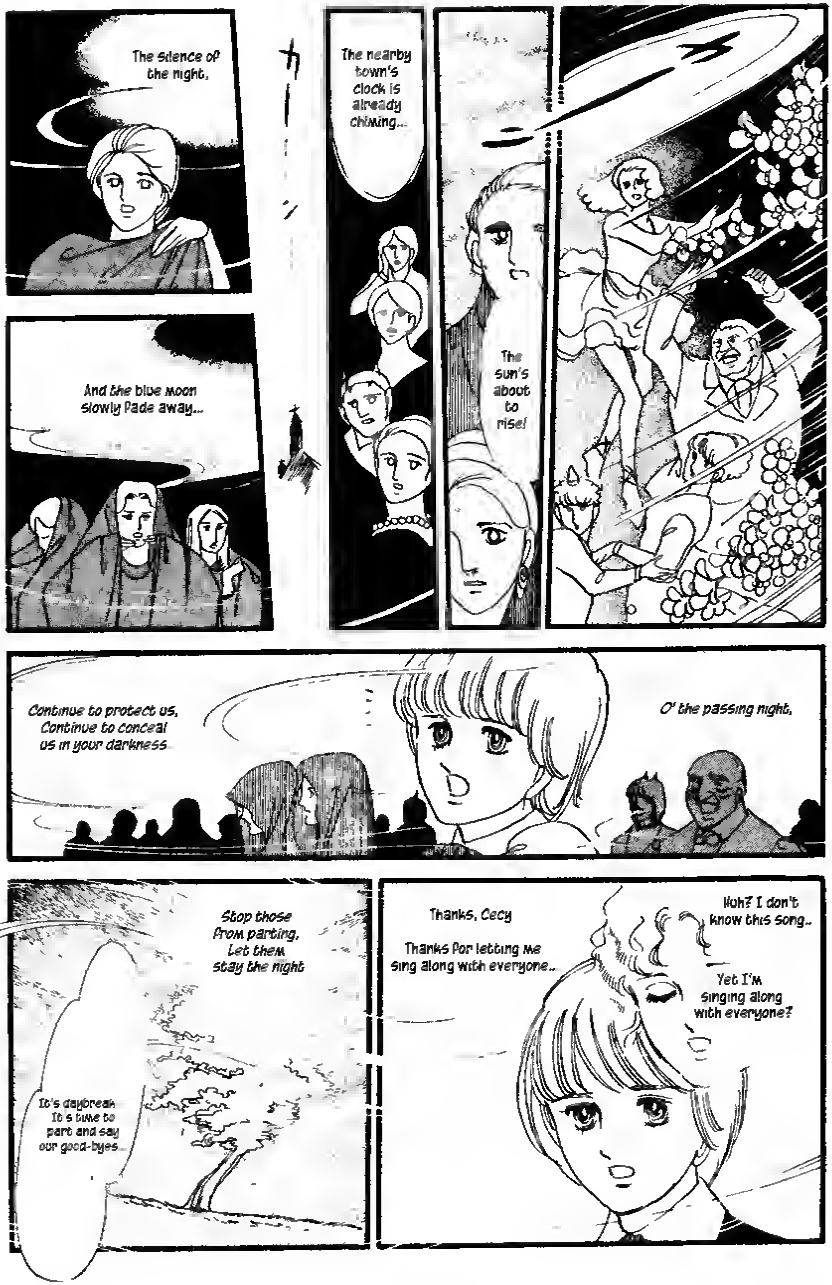
Timothy, st-
Look, Mother!
AGHHHH!

This is Cecy!
Cecy speaking here!
This is Cecy! Not Timothy!
Come up to see me if you'd like! I'm upstairs, first room on the left!
Ah

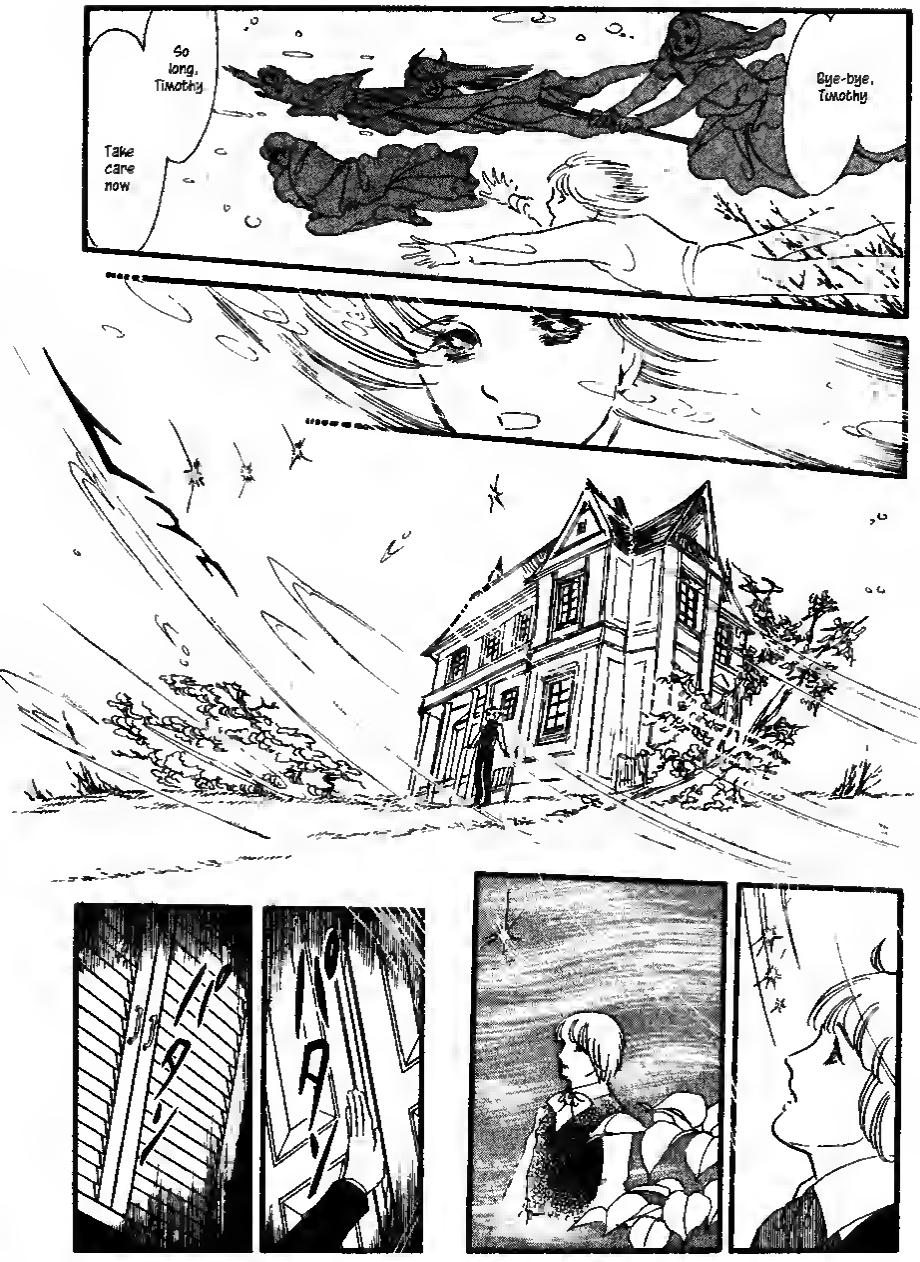
That was Pant-astic!
Cecy!
You're the greatest!
Let Me blow you a kiss For that!
I...
No...
I hate you, Cecy!
I hate you, I hate you!


Cough!
Stop, that tickles...
Timothy.
No, stop it, Spid...
Haha...

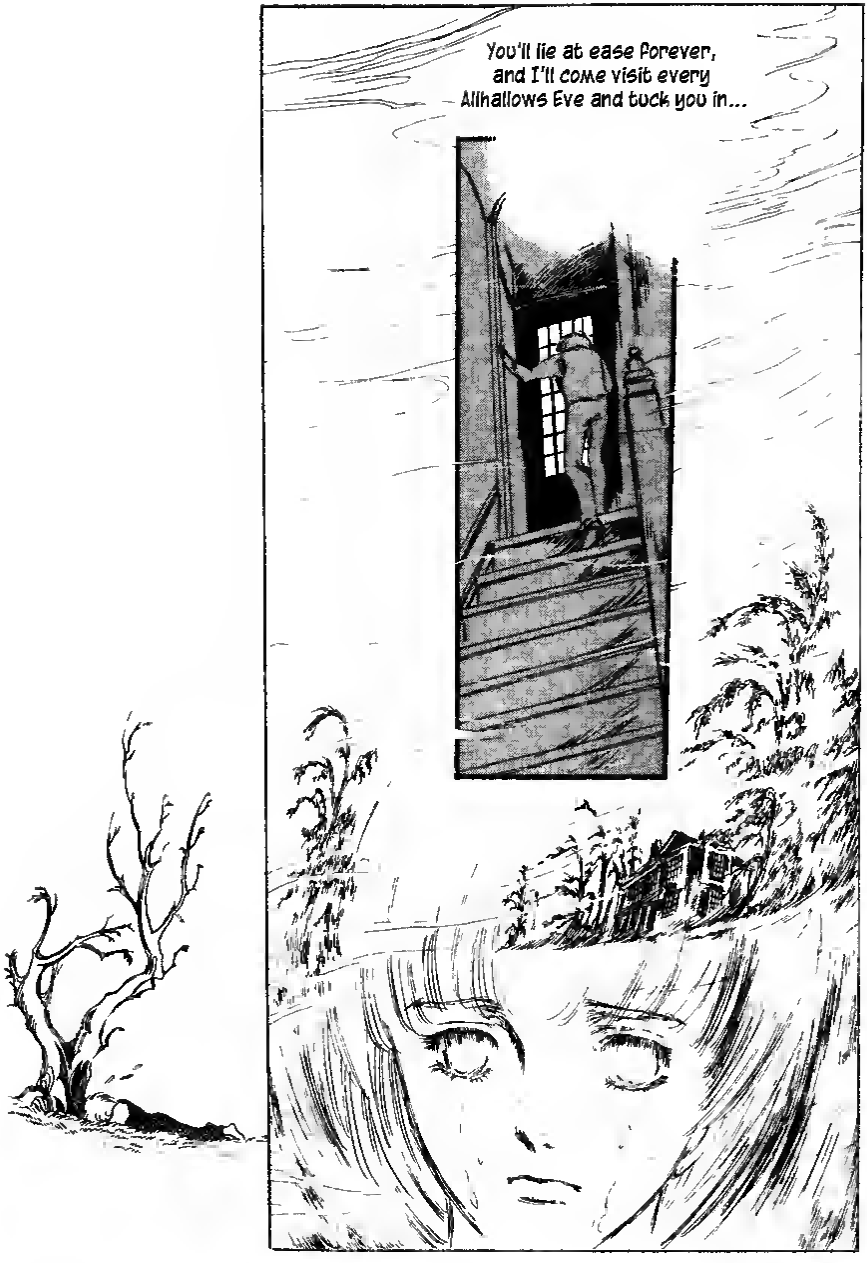
That goes for you too
Don't feel badly, Timothy. Each to his own, each in his own way
How much better things are for you. How rich
The world's dead for us..
Under-stand?
It's worth more per ounce, Timothy.
Life's best to those who live the least of it.
We've seen so much of it, believe me.
Uncle Einar...
I hope you'll keep the words I've just said.
Close at heart from now on.


The silence of the night,
And the blue moon slowly fade away...
The nearby town's clock is already chiming...
The sun's about to rise!
Continue to protect us, Continue to conceal us in your darkness
O' the passing night,
Stop those from parting, Let them stay the night
It's daybreak It's time to part and say our good-byes...
Thanks, Cecy
Thanks For letting me sing along with everyone...
Huh? I don't know this song..
Yet I'm singing along with everyone?

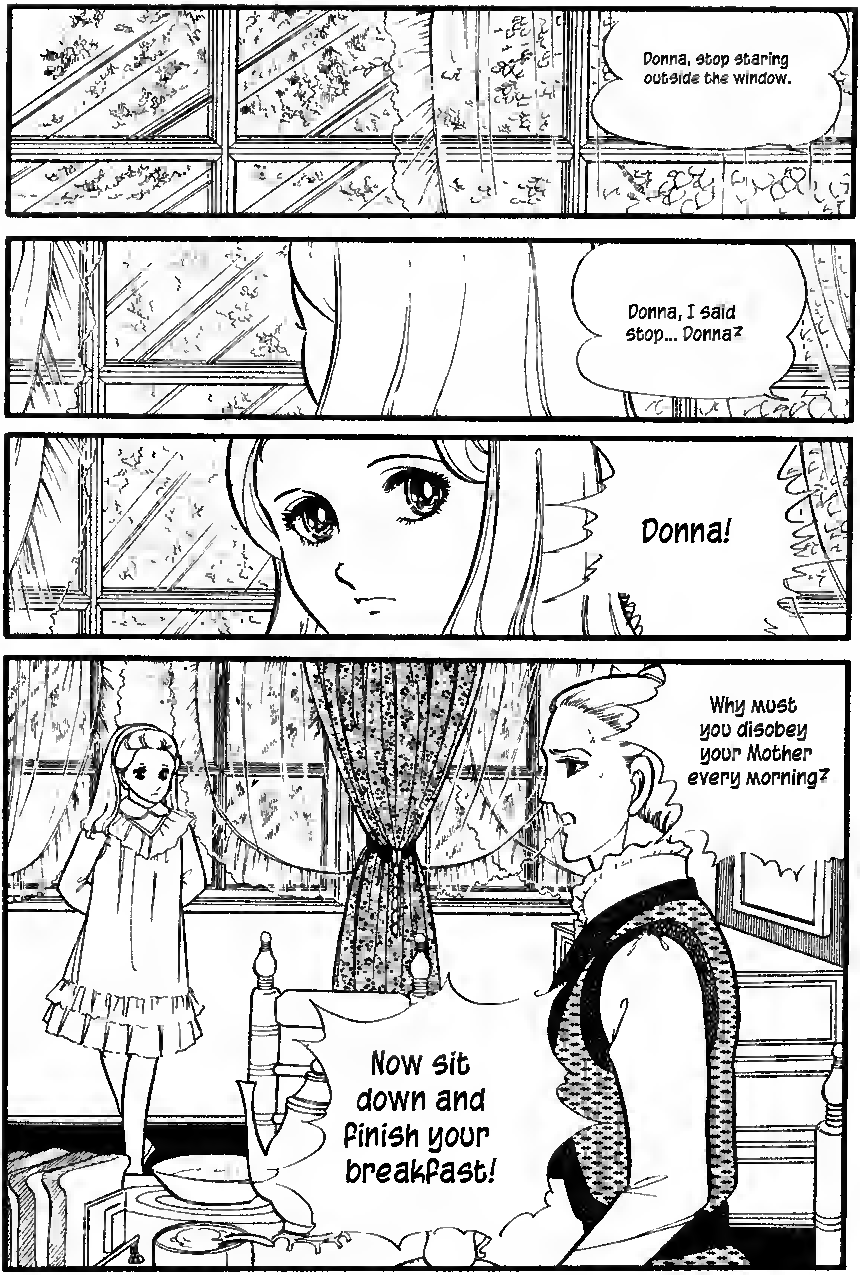
Take care, everyone!
Don't forget we meet at Salem 30 years from now in 1970!
It was an unforgettable evening!
So long then!
I can't remember the last time I've had so much fun!
See you all again in Salem!
So long!
So long!
Ah!
Salem... I wonder if I'll still be alive by then...?
My body is...!

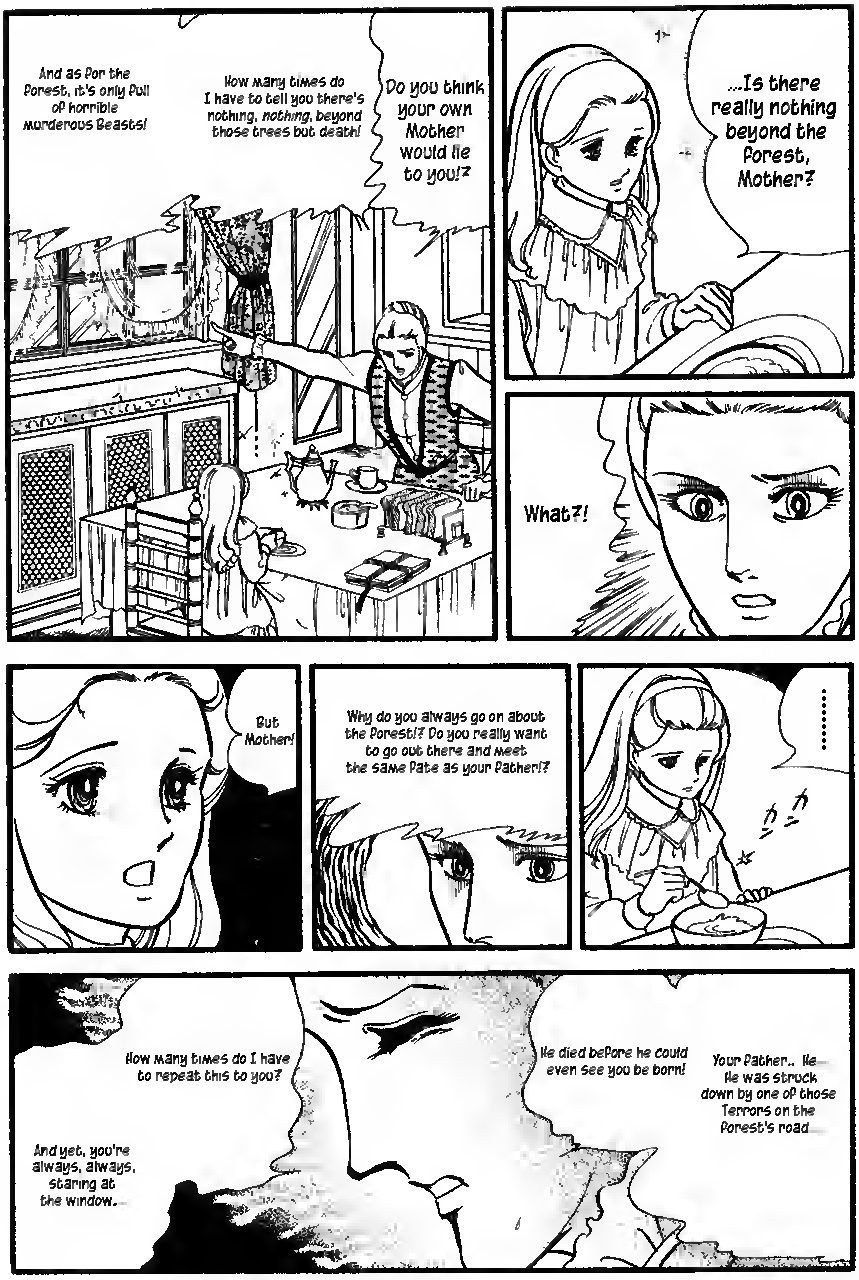

So long, Timothy
Take care now
Bye-bye, Timothy
バタン
バタン

The pale mortality of my face reflected back in the mirror...
Son...
That goes for everyone too
Save the cleaning for later, Laura.
You need a good rest first.
No matter how different you are, no matter if you leave us one day...
And if and when you die,
Your bones will lie undisturbed, we'll see to that, my son...
We love you. Remember that. We all love you...
Mother...

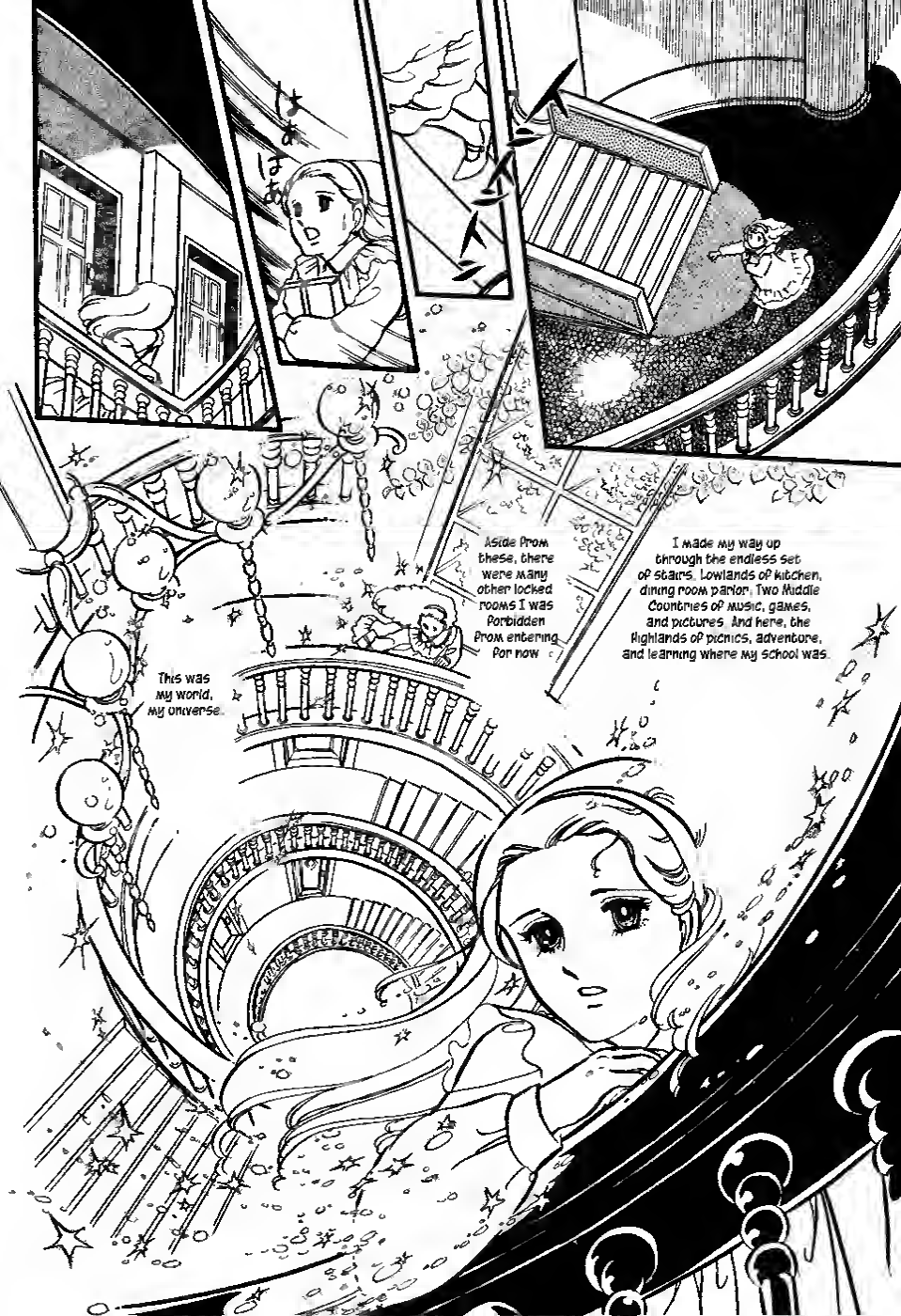

You'll lie at ease forever,
and I'll come visit every
Allhallows Eve and tuck you in...

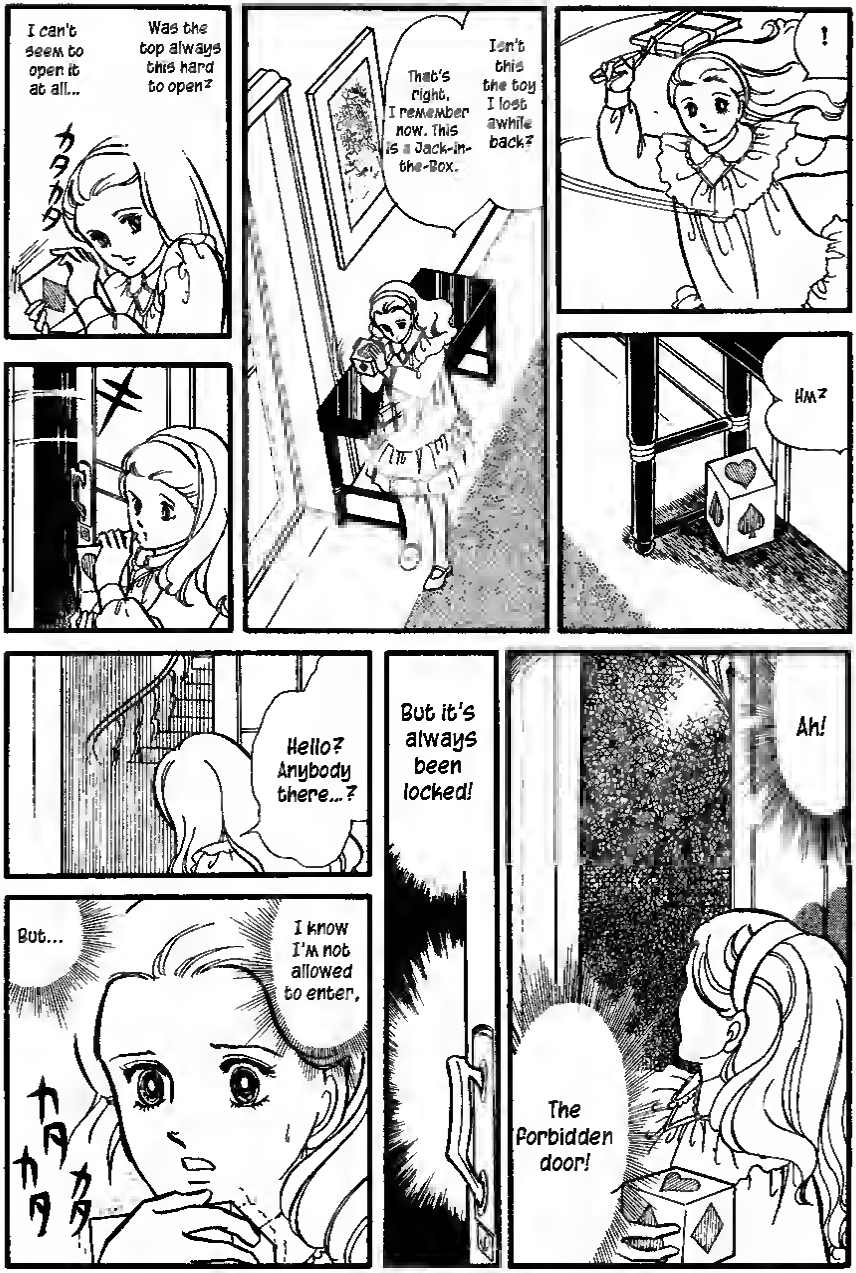
# Jack-in-the-Box

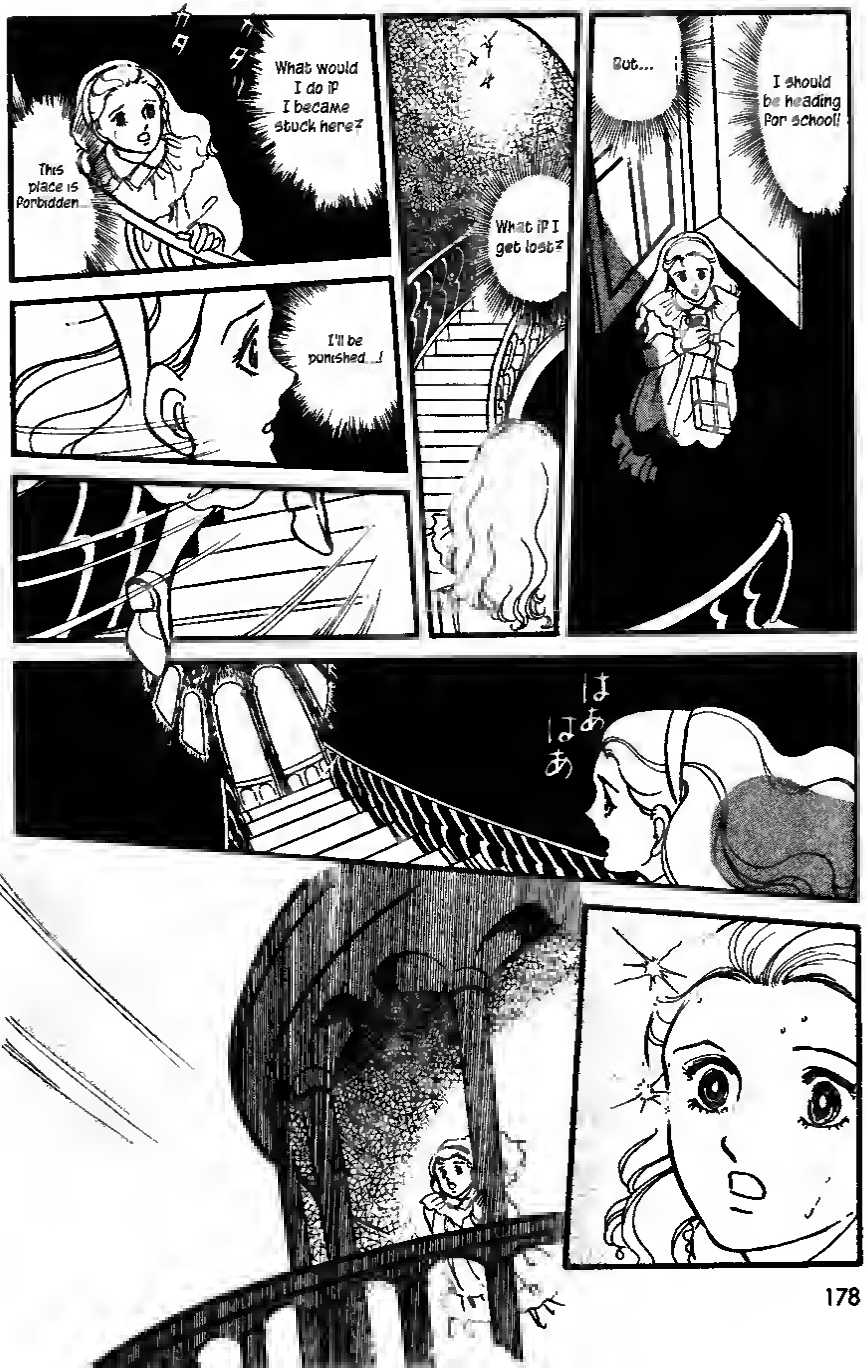

Donna, stop staring outside the window.
Donna, I said stop... Donna?
Donna!
Why must you disobey your Mother every morning?
Now sit down and finish your breakfast!


And as For the Forest, it's only Full oF horrible Murderous Beasts!
How many times do I have to tell you there's nothing, nothing, beyond those trees but death!
Do you think your own Mother would lie to you!?
...Is there really nothing beyond the Forest, Mother?
What?!
But Mother!
Why do you always go on about the Forest!? Do you really want to go out there and meet the same Fate as your Father!?
How many times do I have to repeat this to you?
And yet, you're always, always, staring at the window.
He died beFore he could even see you be born!
Your Father.. He He was struck down by one oF those Terrors on the Forest's road

Your father, god of this world, built every part of this World. It was beautiful for him, and it should be for you. So there's no other place worth thinking about except here...
This house is the World.
Yes, Mother...
There's nothing beyond the forests
Nothing but death, Donna...
Mother often talks about it but never explains what it is...
I wonder if it's some sort of feeling that can't be seen?
Dying... I wonder what it is?
You'll stop thinking about outside and get ready for school!
Now if you understand,
Ok, I'll be right!


Aside from these, there were many other locked rooms I was forbidden from entering for now.
I made my way up through the endless set of stairs. Lowlands of kitchen, dining room parlor. Two middle countries of music, games, and pictures. And here, the highlands of picnics, adventure, and learning where my school was.
This was my world, my universe.


I can't seem to open it at all...
Was the top always this hard to open?
カタカタ
Isn't this the boy I lost awhile back?
That's right, I remember now. This is a Jack-in-the-Box.
!
Hm?
Hello? Anybody there...?
But it's always been locked!
Ah!
The forbidden door!
But...
I know I'm not allowed to enter,
カタカタ


What would I do if I became stuck here?
This place is forbidden...
I'll be punished...!
What if I get lost?
But...
I should be heading for school!
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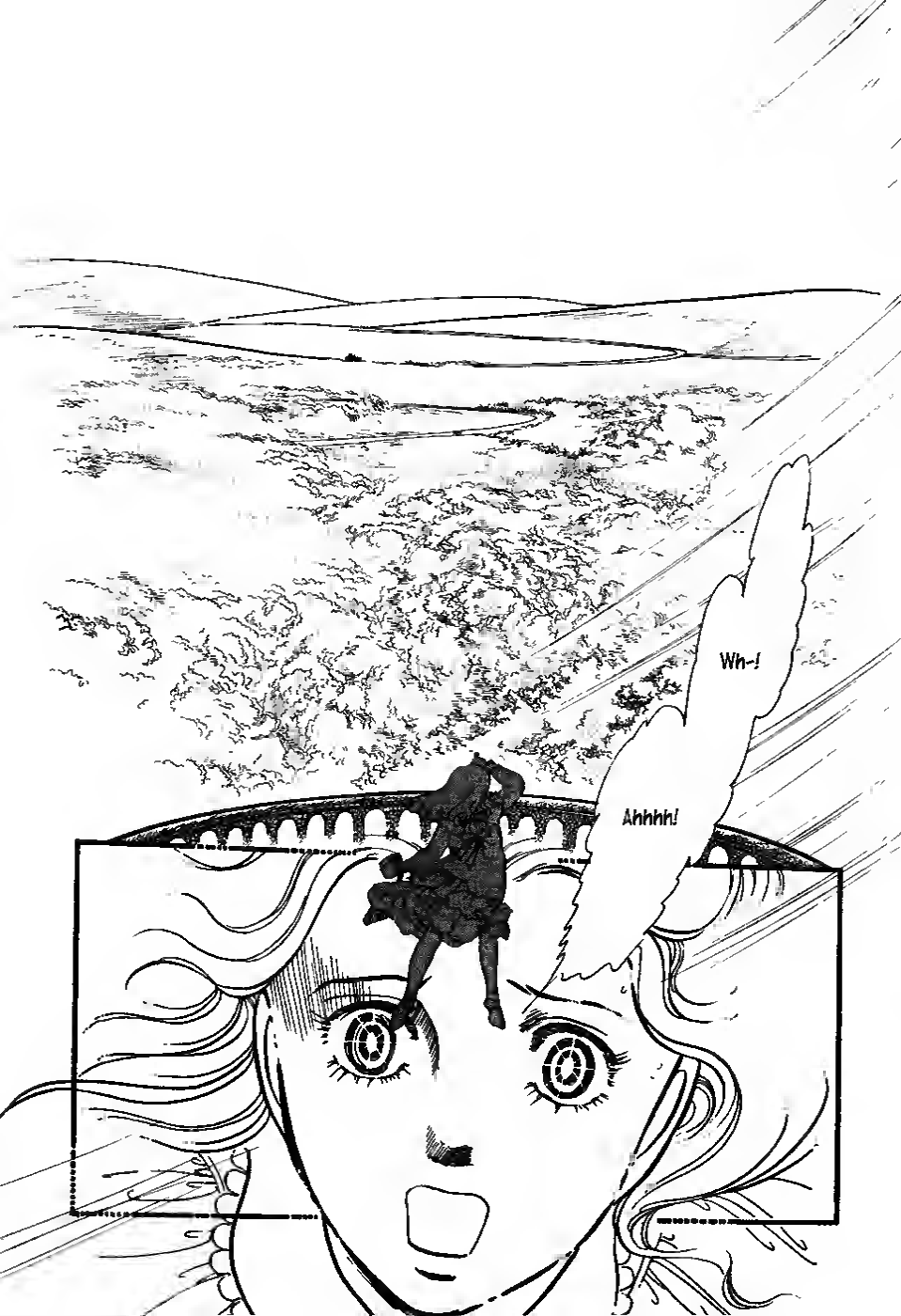
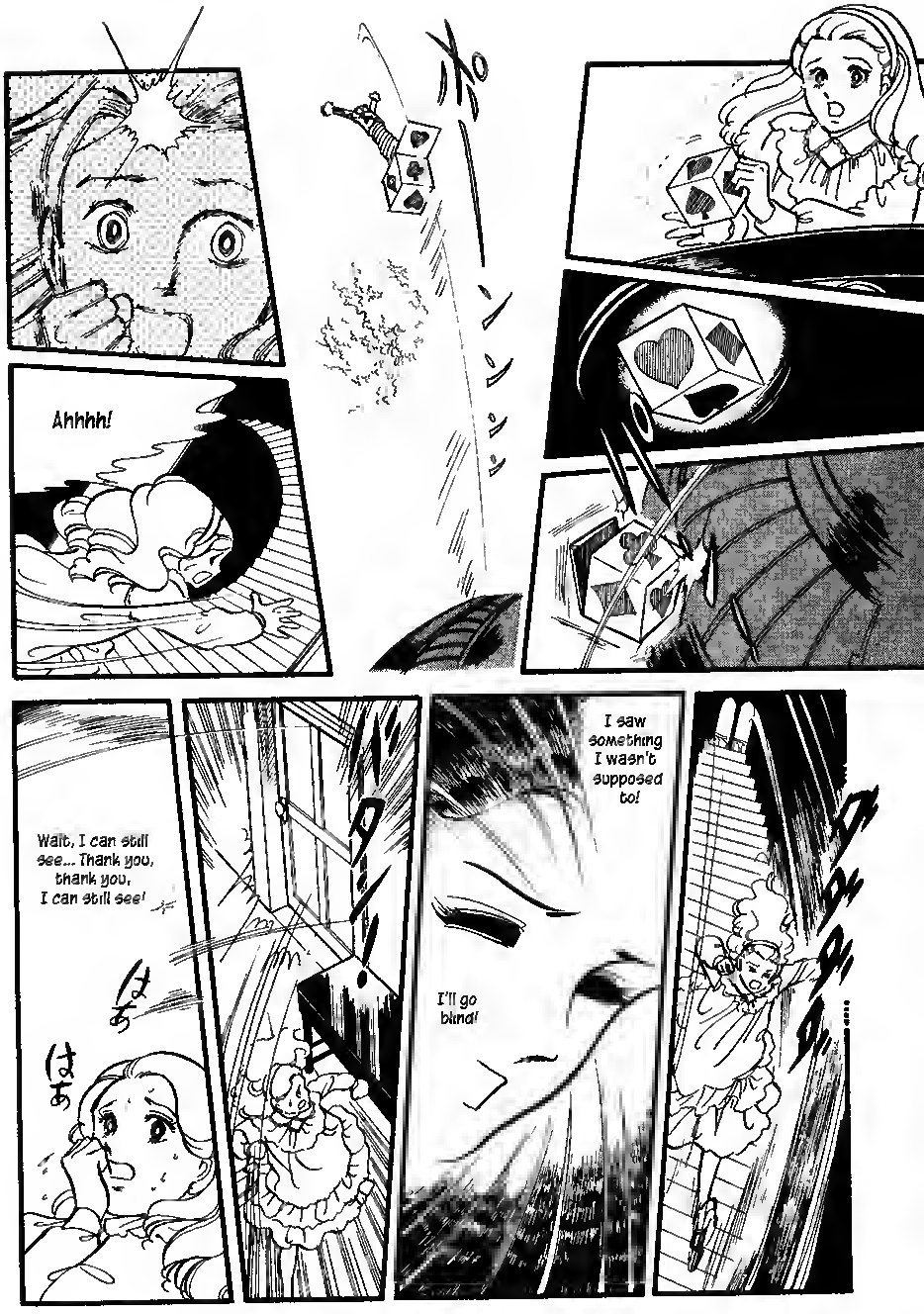
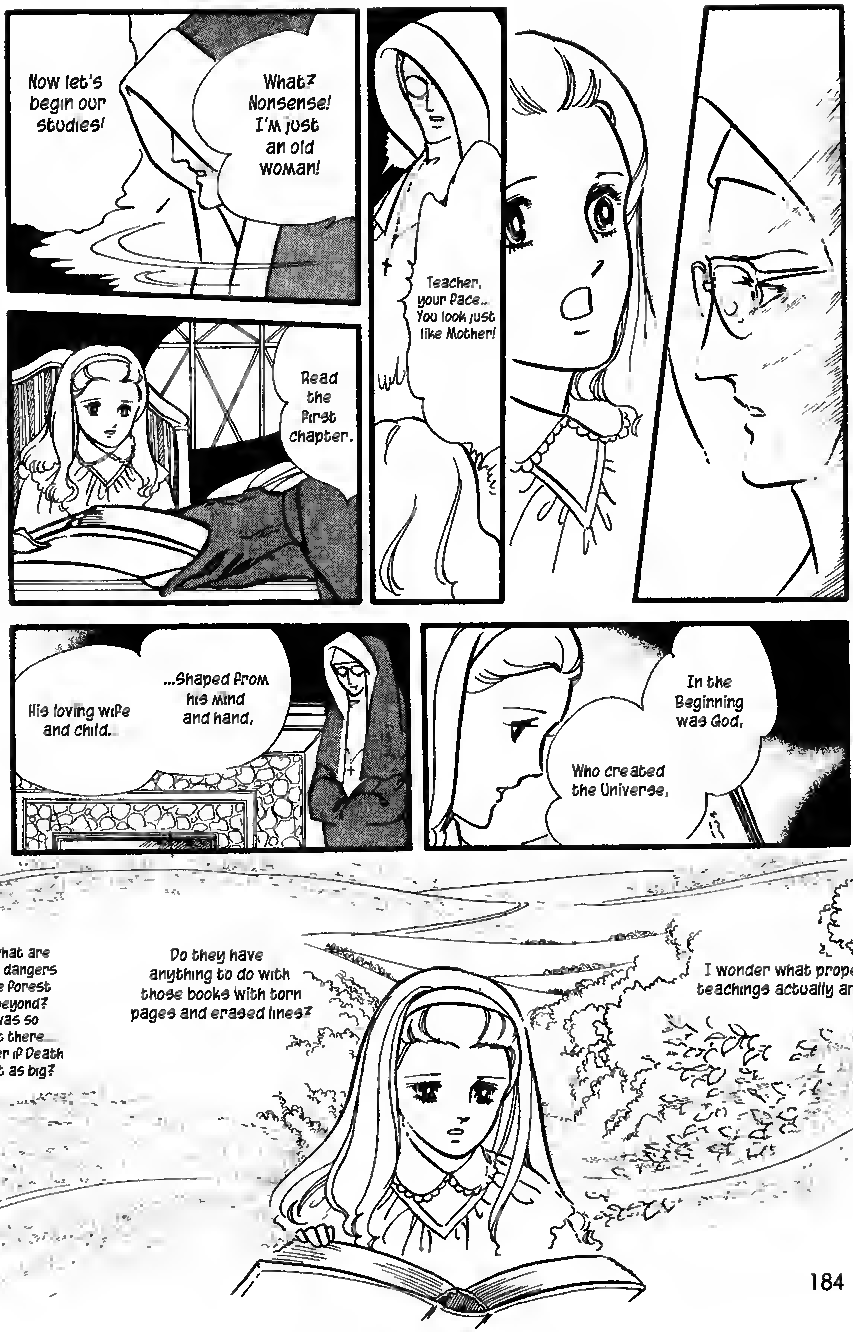

Wh-!
Ahhhh!


Ahhhh!
I saw something I wasn't supposed to!
I'll go blind!
Wait, I can still see... Thank you, thank you, I can still see!

Hello, Donna.
You're late.
...Morning, Teacher.
Teacher...
And not just a little, you're 30 minutes late. How do you explain yourself?
I'm sorry, Teacher!
It was open!? Did you go inside!?
One of the... Forbidden doors was open on my way here...
I...

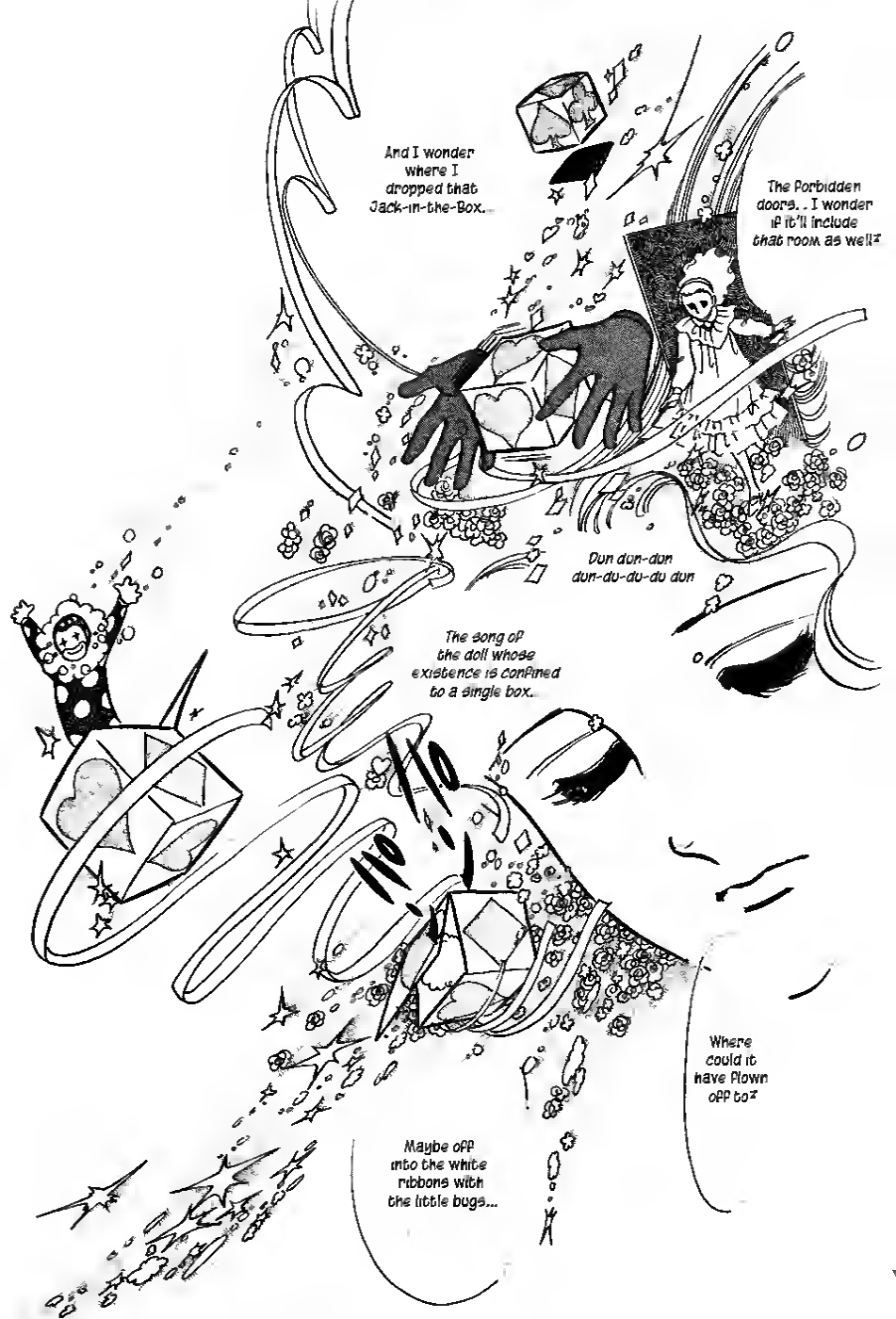
I know I shouldn't have but I just had to, I had to!
And before I knew it, I ended up climbing the stairs inside all the way to the top...
I'm sorry, please don't tell Mother about this!
There was this big blue room, and a green one...
And white ribbons with bugs running on them. But that's all I saw!
I didn't stay long, I swear, I swear!
Please don't tell Mother about this!
.....
So you understand what you did was wrong.
Yes, I know, I know and I'm sorry!
Green room, ribbons... Yes, ribbons, and the little bugs...
So you saw...
Did you...
Like what you saw?
I was scared... It was just so big.

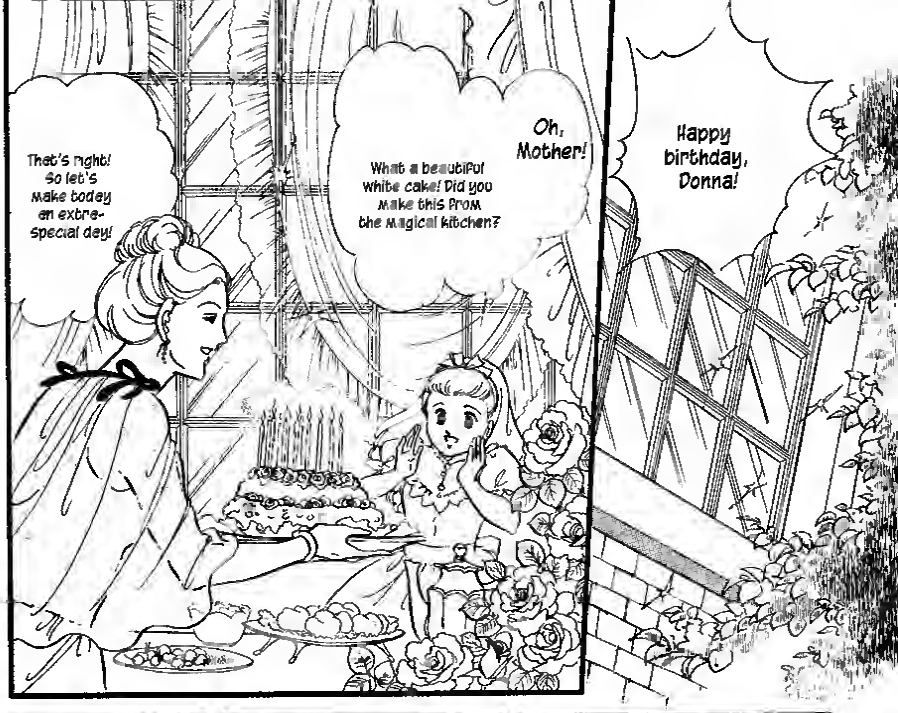
We learn, oh God, but slowly, and with pain.. We think we do right, but all the time, we kill the Plan..
Yes, yes it is..!
So what made you do this?
...Was it your Mother? Was she too nervous, was she mean, did she snap at you,
Did she hold you too tight? Did you just want a little time alone, is that it, is that it, is that it?
I... I'M not sure... Maybe...
Remember that your Father, our God, created this world.
And both your Mother and I are here to give you the proper teachings so that you can be the next Ruler of the Universe...
Yes, but... Did Mother lie to me about out there.. ? And the Beasts as well?
Give this to your Mother. It tells her you must have two full hours every afternoon to yourself, to prowl where you wish.. Except out there.
No, my dear. The outside is still full of more dangers than you could ever imagine...

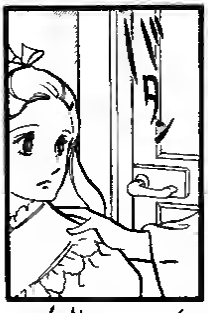

Now let's begin our studies!
What? Nonsense! I'm just an old woman!
Teacher, your face... You look just like Mother!
Read the first chapter.
His loving wife and child.
...Shaped from his mind and hand.
In the beginning was God.
Who created the Universe.
And what are these dangers in the forest and beyond? It was so big out there... I wonder if death is just as big?
Do they have anything to do with those books with torn pages and erased lines?
I wonder what proper teachings actually are?

Am I? So I am, so I am...
What's wrong, Mother? You're sweating all over!
I'm back!
Welcome back, dear
DAD
More importantly, I've got a surprise for you! Do you know what it is?
It's your birthday! It's coming tomorrow!
But it's only been 10 months!
Yes, but a miracle happened so you'll be turning 12 tomorrow! Remember that anything your mother says is really so, my dear.
Oh, mother!
Mother!

I wonder if Teacher will be invited to my party?
No, Mother and Teacher have never even met
Maybe from now on,
My birthdays will come sooner and sooner.
I can't believe my birthday's coming so soon...
Strange...
I wonder what exactly happened with the World?
I remember For my 6th birthday, My present was the schoolroom in the Highlands and meeting with Teacher For the First time.
9th, the miraculous hell-Fired kitchen...
8th was the music room
For my 7th birthday, it was the playroom in the Lowlands
10th was the room with phonographs and 11th was the strange green room with a carpet that had to be mowed instead of swept!
But Mother said they'll all be mine to do as I please when I turn 20..
Even so, there're hundreds of locked rooms that are still Forbidden to me.


And I wonder where I dropped that Jack-in-the-Box...
The forbidden doors... I wonder if it'll include that room as well?
Dun dun-dun dun-du-du-du dun
The song of the doll whose existence is confined to a single box...
Where could it have flown off to?
Maybe off into the white ribbons with the little bugs...


Happy birthday, Donna!
Oh, Mother!
What a beautiful white cake! Did you make this from the magical kitchen?
That's right! So let's make today an extra-special day!



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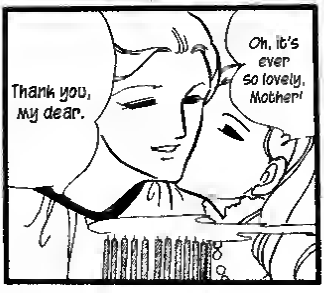
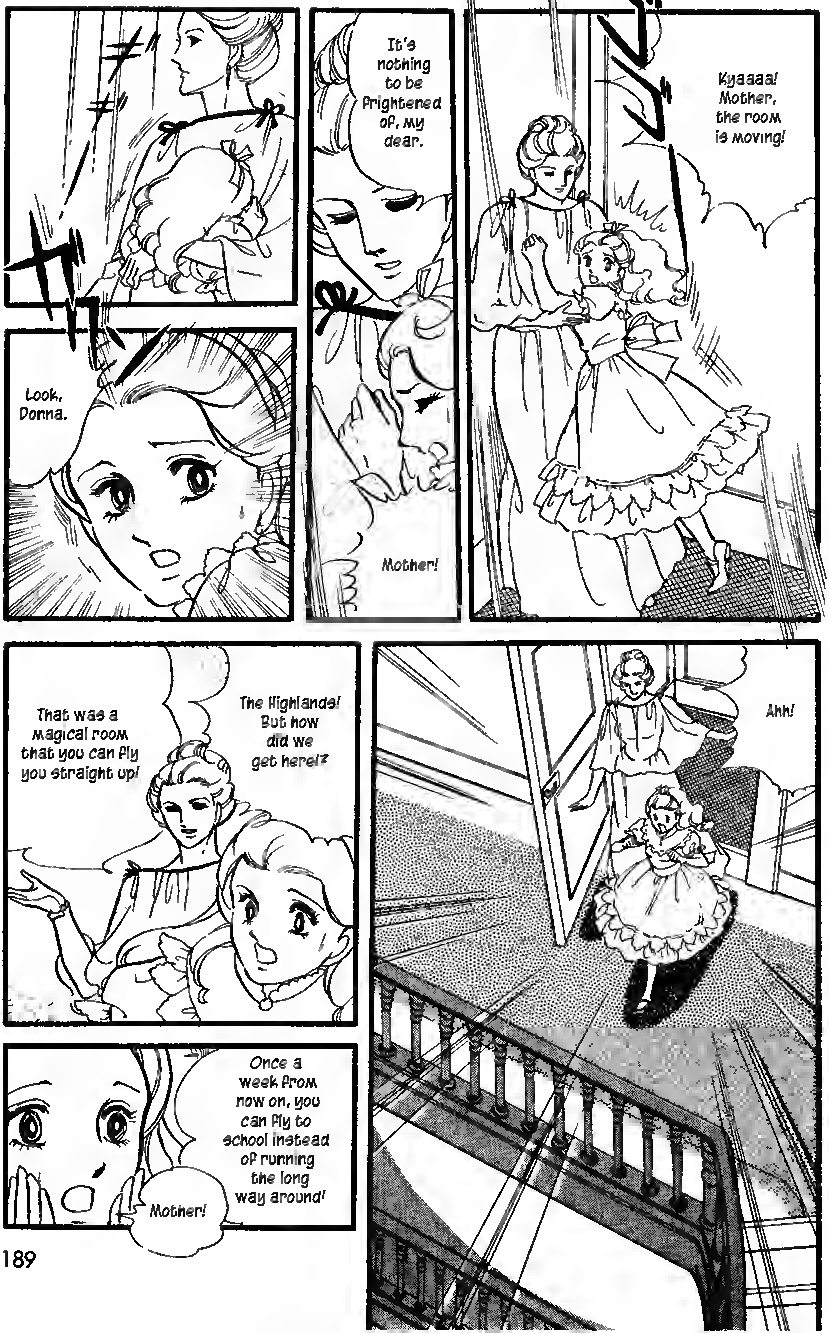
This?
But it's so small with nothing inside.
Try coming in first.


Oh, it's ever so lovely, Mother!
Thank you, my dear.

Now come, I've got a present for you!
Which room will it be this time?

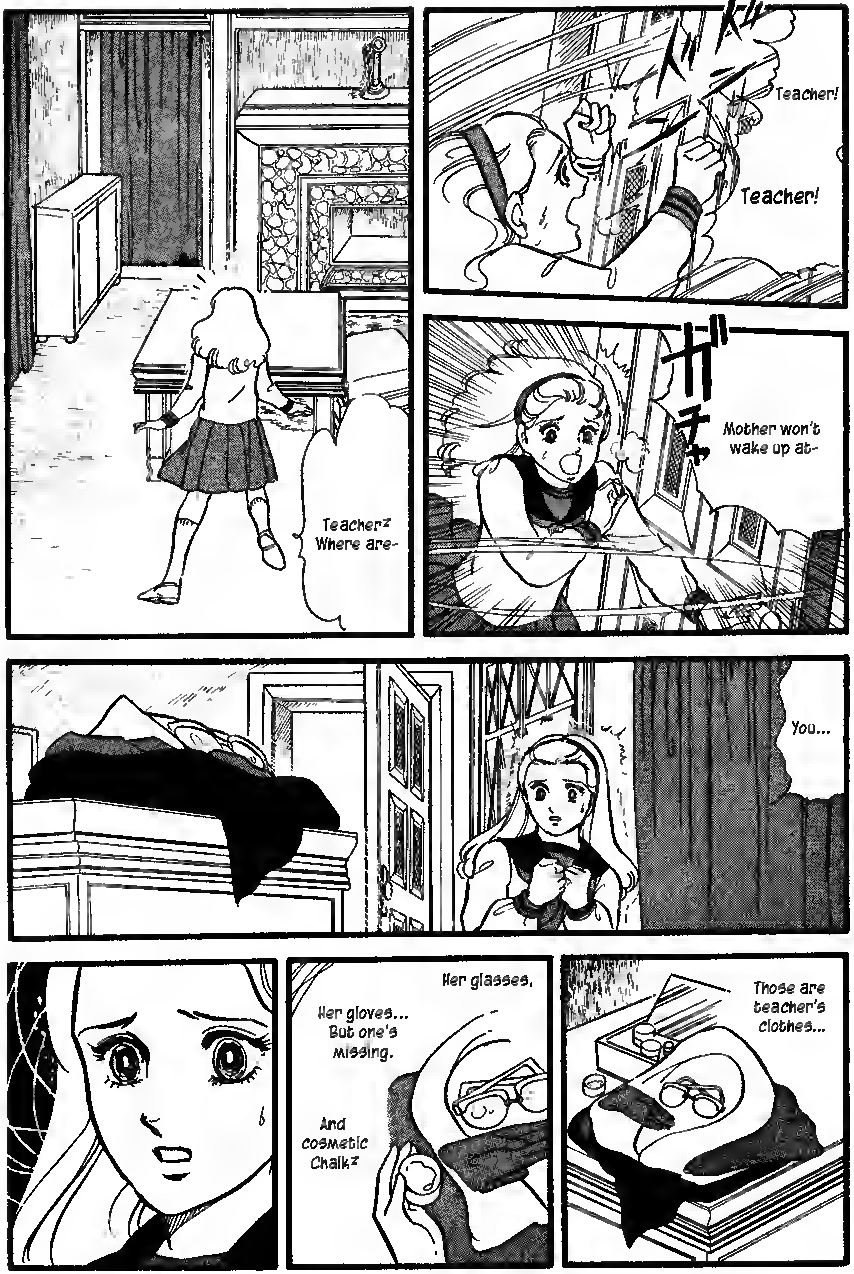

Kyaaaa! Mother, the room is moving!
It's nothing to be frightened of, my dear.
Look, Donna.
Mother!
Ahh!
The Highlands! But how did we get here!?
That was a magical room that you can fly you straight up!
Once a week from now on, you can fly to school instead of running the long way around!
Mother!

Oh, Mother. Today's been such a lovely day and I'm so happy
And so shall you come to love this World for what it is, Donna.
The World is full of miracles and with each year, you'll come to learn more of its secrets.
Yes. Yes there are, my dear.
It's wonderful! There're so many things I never even dreamed of in this World!
Oh, Mother!
Have you... ever seen one of them...?
Don't worry, they can't cross over the wall.
Was that sound from the Beasts?
ビク!
It's too horrible.
Yes
But I don't want to talk about it

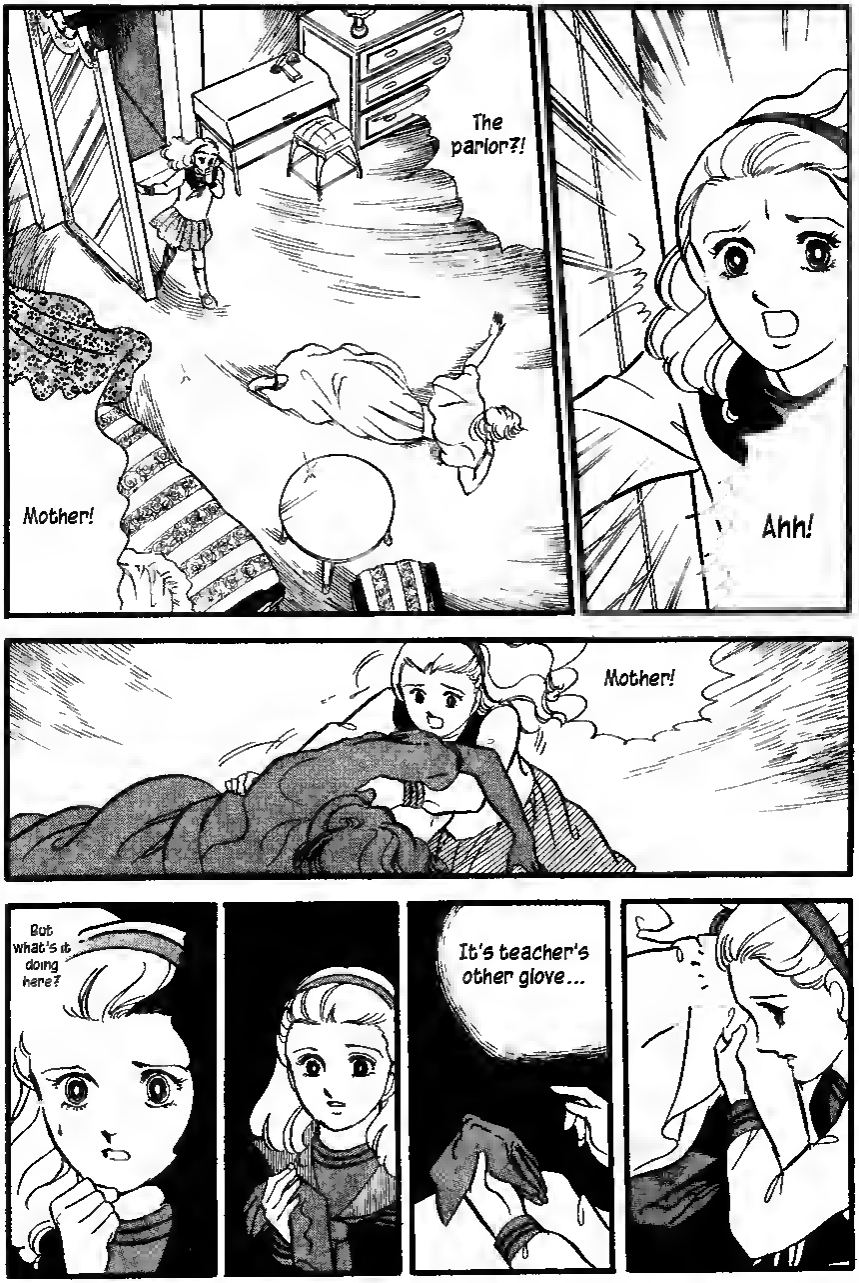
Oh, ok. Good night then, Mother
I'm afraid you'll have to go to bed now You have school tomorrow, after all.
Mother, can I listen to the phonograph some more?
Sorry.
That's odd... Mother usually doesn't drink so much...
It's nothing, dear. Just dropped the champagne bottle, that's all.
Mother?
Well, today was fun I wonder which rooms I'll see next year, and the year after that, and the year after that...?
What is dying anyways?
And I wonder what'll happen to the Beasts by then? Would they die?

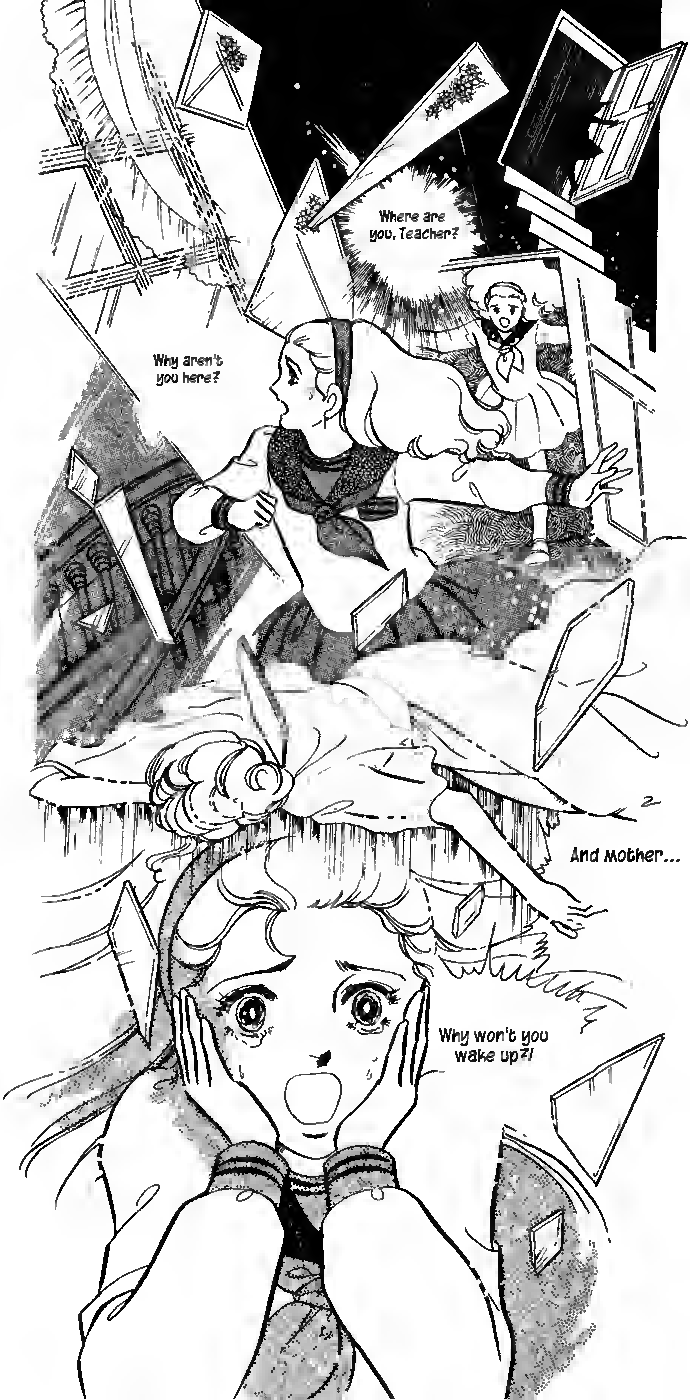
Mother said Father wouldn't return after he died.
But why is that? Did God enjoy it so much he never came back?
Was Death a journey then...?
Ah! I forgot to hand the letter to Mother!
Mother!
Mo-

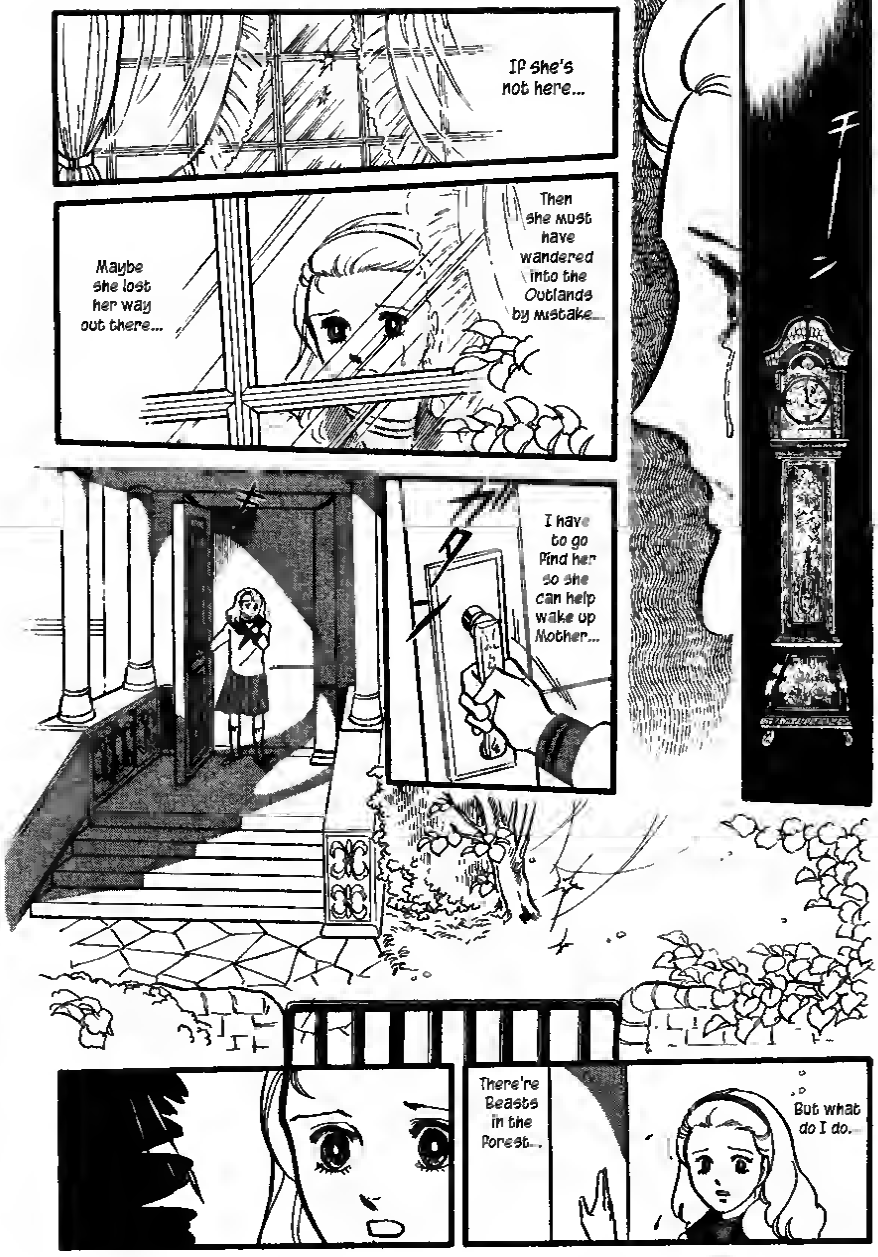
What's wrong, Mother? Are you sleeping?
Mother, wake up!
Mother, what's wrong? Why won't you wake up? I have to go to school now but... Mother?
Mother?!
Mother...

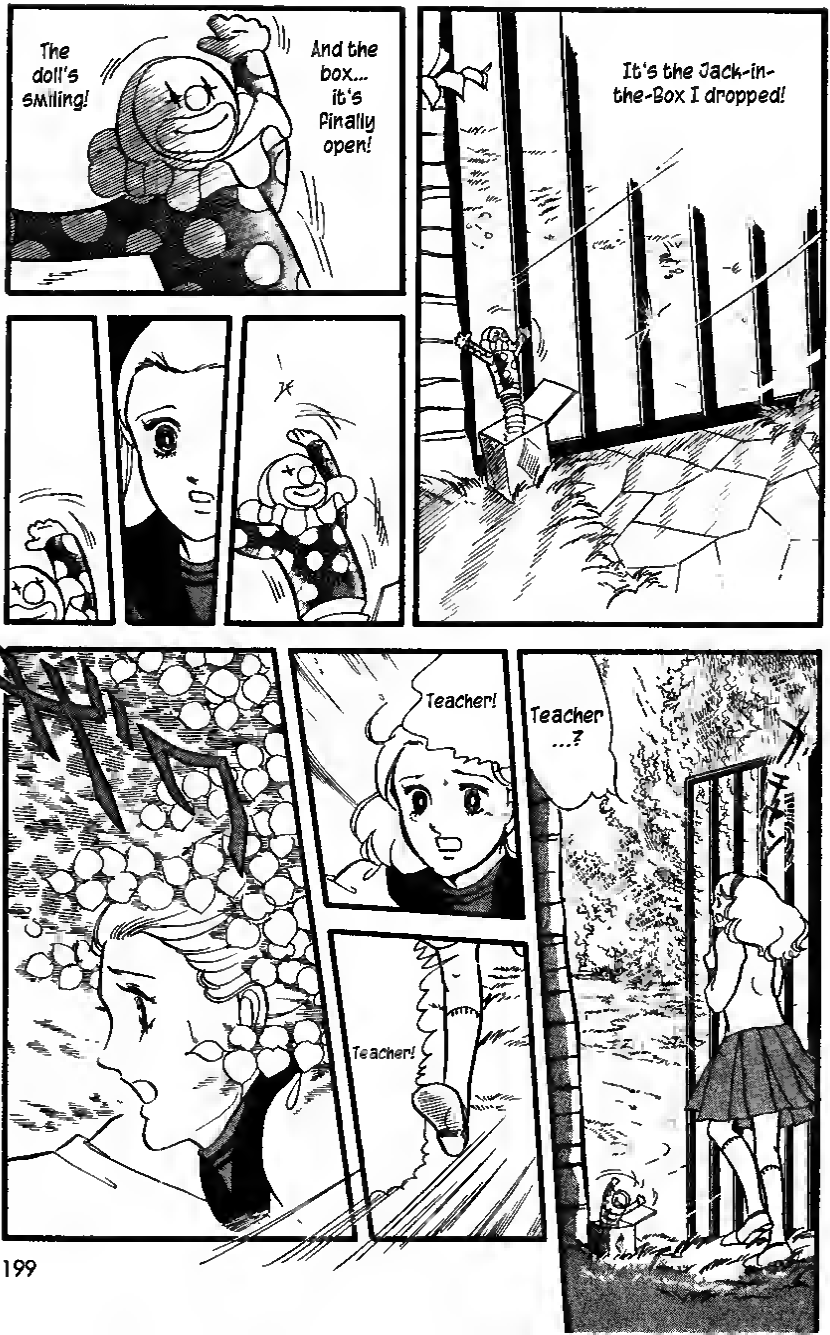

Teacher!
Teacher!
Teacher?
Where are-
Mother won't wake up ab-
You...
Her glasses.
Her gloves... But one's missing.
And cosmetic chalk?
Those are teacher's clothes...

Teacher —?
It's a moving room!
This one falls down!
I'm falling!


The parlor?!
Mother!
Ahh!
Mother!
But what's it doing here?
It's teacher's other glove...


Where are you, Teacher?
Why aren't you here?
And Mother...
Why won't you wake up?!

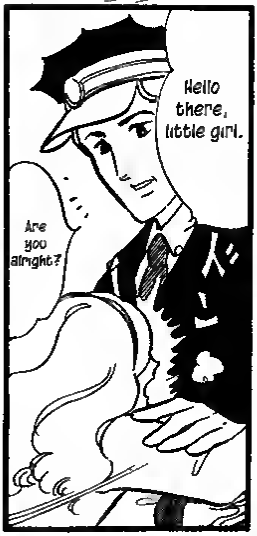

If she's not here...
Then she must have wandered into the Outlands by mistake...
Maybe she lost her way out there...
I have to go find her so she can help wake up Mother...
F
There're Beasts in the Forest...
But what do I do...


The doll's smiling!
And the box... it's finally open!
It's the Jack-in-the-Box I dropped!
Teacher!
Teacher ...?
Teacher!

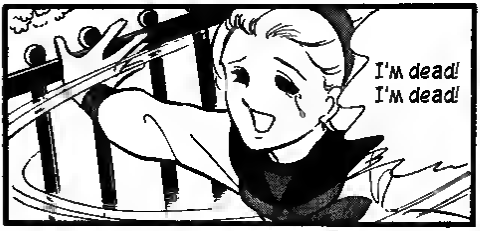
A house?
Was that my World?
Was that my Universe? It looks so small from here...!
I don't know how to work the Magic-kitchen and Teacher isn't there to help me either...
But Mother won't wake up even if I do go back...
What should I do? Turn around?
Death!
But what is death?
Is it just another room?
Mother always said only death lies beyond the Forest.

Another green room...
A blue room...
A room far larger than all the other rooms...
Oh, Mother, Teacher...
It hurts... Is this dying...
I'm dying, aren't I!...
Ahhh!

ヒック


Hello there, little girl.
Are you alright?

What's with the girl over there?
She's going around touching everything?
Hm? Who knows...

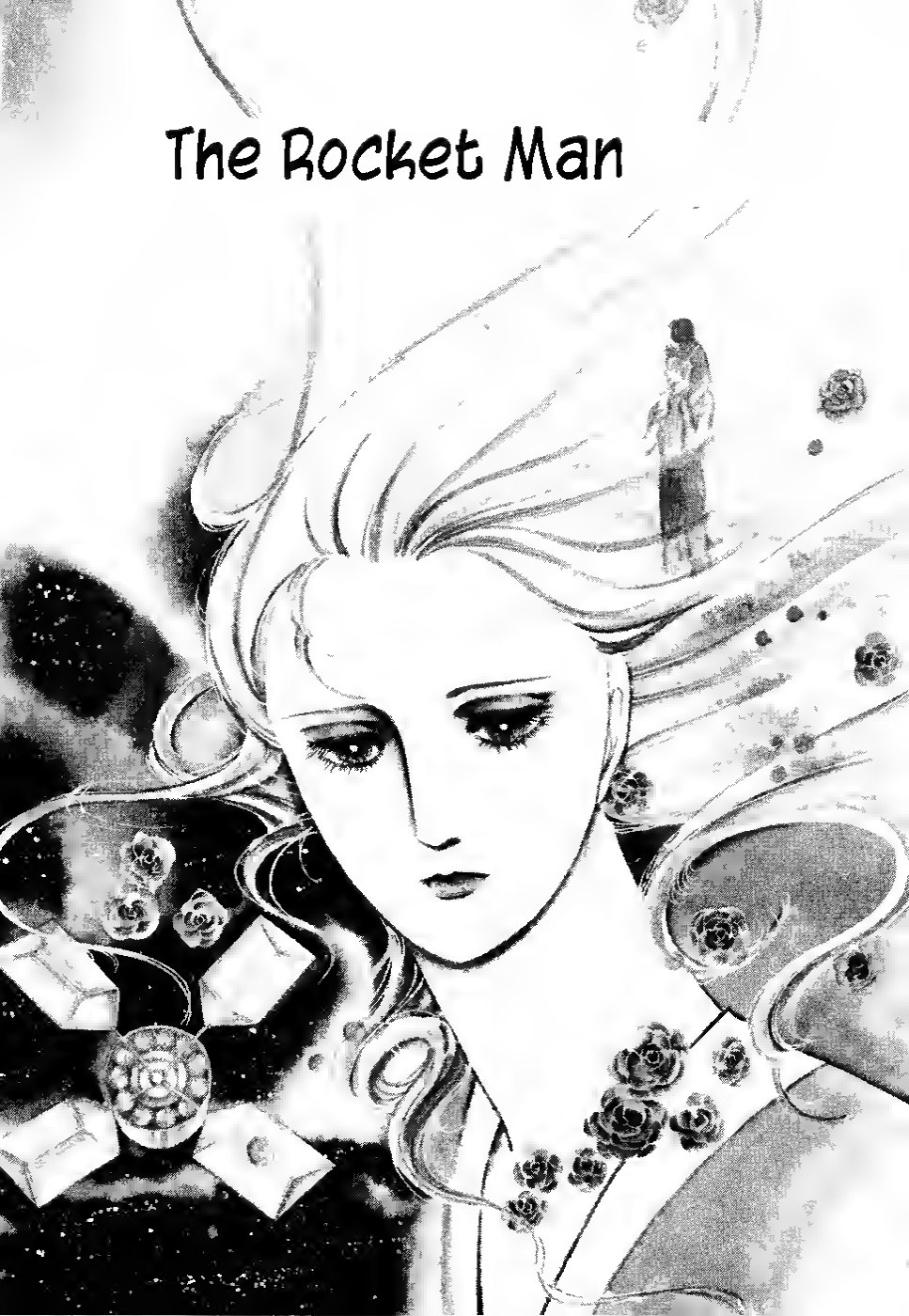

I'm dead! I'm dead!

I'm dead!
It's good to be dead!

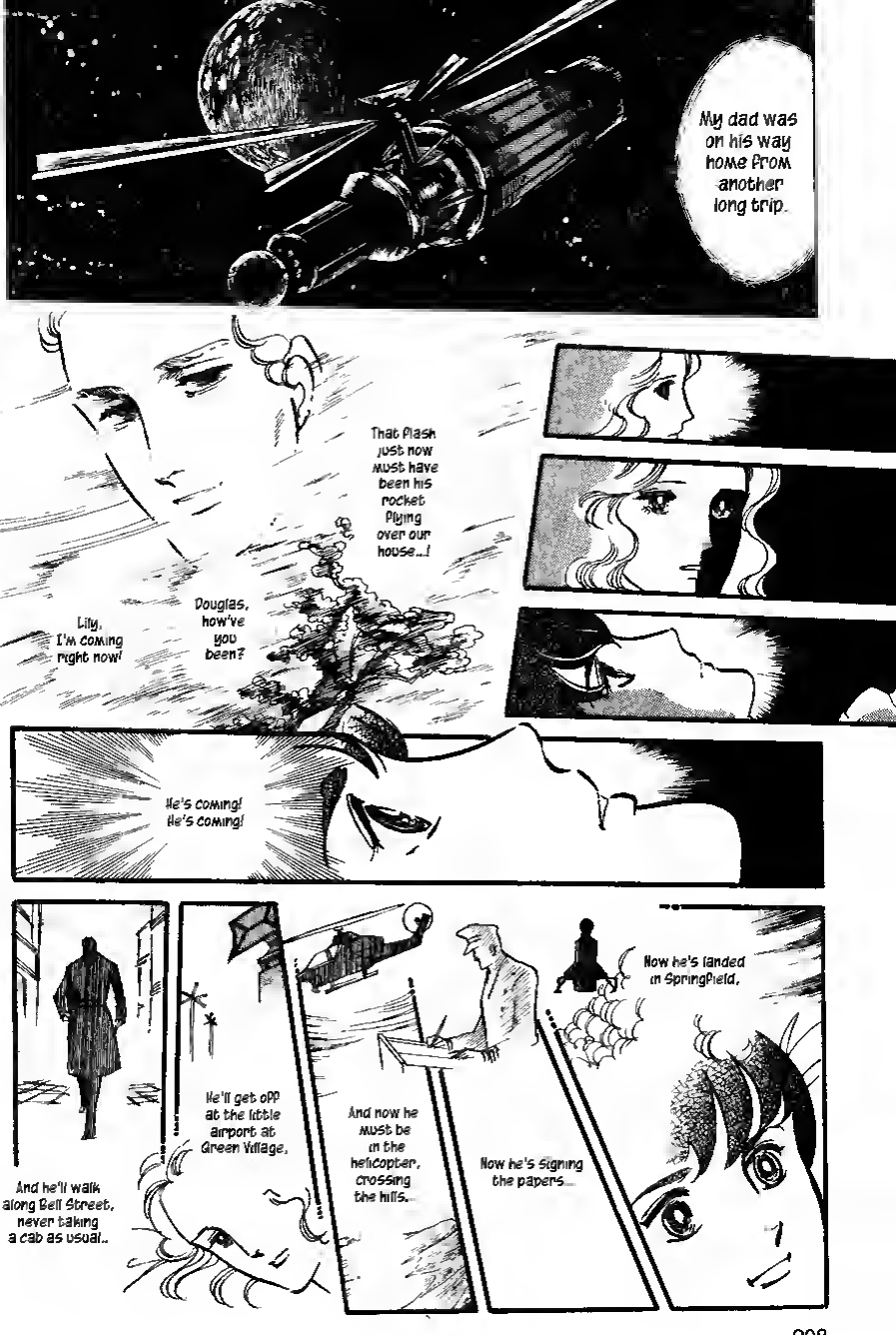
I'm dead!

I never knew Death could be this wonderful!
Oh, I never knew...!
I'm dead!
Huh.
One of them new kid games, I guess. I'll never be able to figure out children.

# The Rocket Man



I suppose so...
You will help me keep him here this time, won't you?
When your father comes home,
Doug...
But I doubt it'll work.
And neither did mother.
It was already midnight but I didn't want to sleep at all.


My dad was on his way home from another long trip.
That flash just now must have been his rocket flying over our house...!
Lily, I'm coming right now!
Douglas, how've you been?
He's coming! He's coming!
And he'll walk along Bell Street, never taking a cab as usual..
He'll get off at the little airport at Green Village,
And now he must be in the helicopter, crossing the hills..
Now he's signing the papers...
Now he's landed in Springfield,

He's here at last!
The door just opened! It must have recognized him!
!!
コッ
コッ
コッ
コッ!
He's back.
But from where, I wonder?
His black box...
It's here in the living room.

Soon, a very fine powder.
I pushed it into the centrifuge machine I had built in my 9th grade shop class
His black, astronaut uniform...
Dad's uniform.
Like so...
Would precipitate out
The iron smell of Mars,
The green ivy smell of Venus,
And the scent of sulphur and fire of Mercury...
I'll sleep with it tonight...
As for the powder,
The dry-cleaners will come for it first thing next morning.
Woops, I should put the uniform back in the box now

There he was, at the breakfast table,
As if he had been here all the time and hadn't been gone for 3 months.
Alright.
Morning.
Slept good?
I'm glad I collected the dust last night when I had the chance.
The uniform had already been cleaned by the dry-cleaners.
Also... Let me think... what else...
The kitchen sink is clogged and needs to be repaired.
'Course! Anything else?
Dear, could you mow the lawn?

I remember my dad that afternoon, digging and digging in the garden. His arms moving swiftly, planting, cutting, pruning, and his face always down to the soil.
His eyes always down to what he was doing, never up to the sky
As for my Mother, she looked just like a little girl.
By the third day, my Mother would break into tears again and by the fourth, he would leave once more... It would be useless to try and wake Mother up after he leaves, nor try and get her to eat breakfast. That's how these next four days would pass, same as all the previous times...
But by the second day, he would look at the stars.
Even so, today was still the first day.
Dad!
Let's go to the television carnival!
Sure thing!
Together with dad.
Laughing together with Mom and dad.
Together as a family
The dust from his uniform might have been my gift
But mother probably hadn't received any gifts from dad...

And my Mom eventually ran out and cut them all down.
It was those Martian sunflowers.
. That's right. There was that one time he brought something for Mother.
They grew very large,
But after he was gone a month,
The best thing in a lifetime of best things.
It's...
Dad... What's it like...? Out in space, I mean...

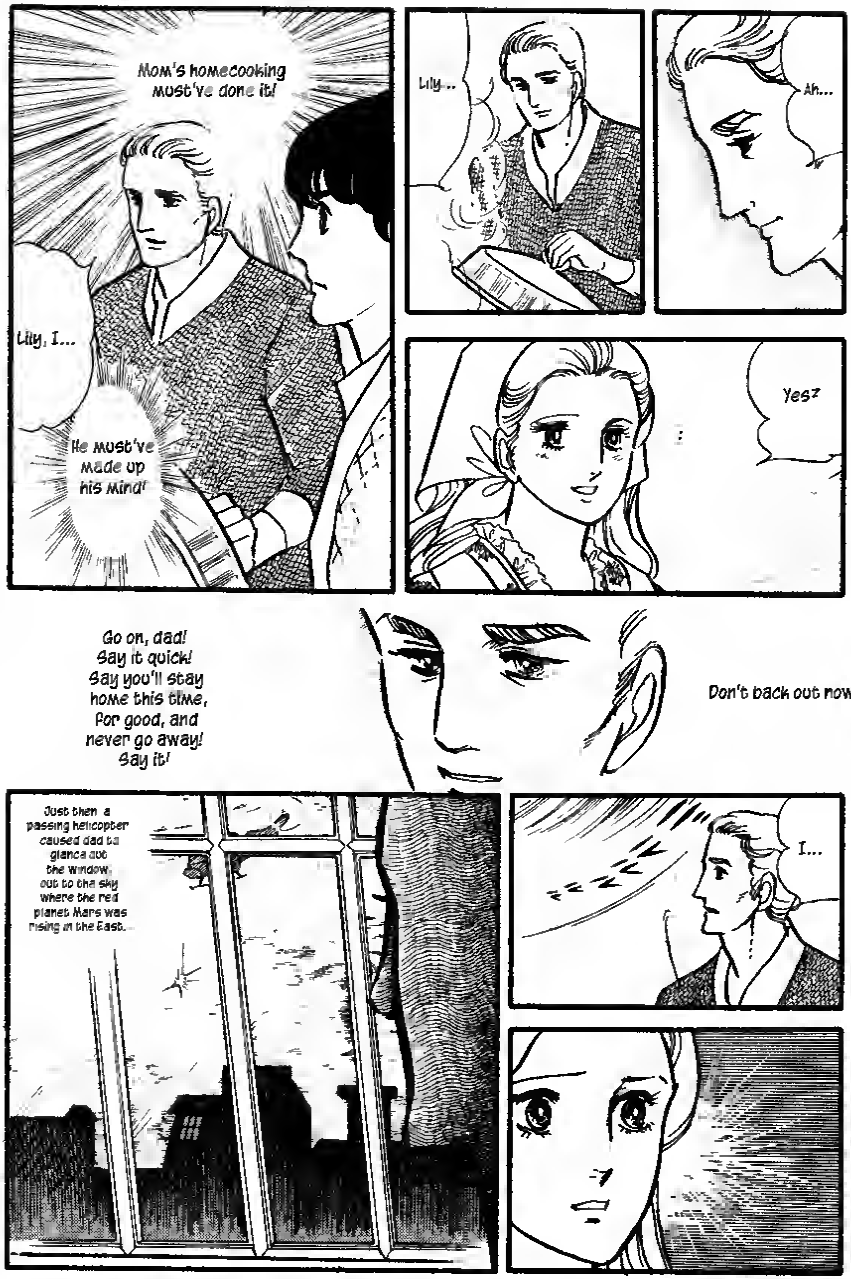
I'm sorry, Mother...
I asked that same question again without thinking.
I'm sorry...
Come on, let's go home now...
Actually, it's really nothing at all. Routine. You wouldn't like it at all.
But you always go back.
Habit.
Yay!
Oh, all right.
Doug, that's...
Could you put on your uniform?
I've never once seen you in it.
Please, Please, Please, dad?
Dad, Can I ask you to do something for me?
What is it, Doug?

S-sorry...
You're not helping at all At all
Here I come..
How do I look?
Try turning around...
Mother's eyes looked just beyond him, over his shoulder, at his chin or hands, but never into his eyes, as if he were a mere shadow.
If she did look at his eyes, her eyes were covered with a film, like an animal going to sleep

It was a lovely day, and so was my mother
The next day, we took a trip down to the beach
Whew!
You MISS this.
Ah, this is it.
Dad never tried to call when he was out in space
He said once, "If I called you, I'd want to be with you It'd be too painful."
Hehe!
He meant on the rocket, of course. But he never said "rocket" or mentioned the rocket and all the things you couldn't have an ice like Mom's cooking or a friendly chat with his son
Looks like you can swim pretty darn good now...
That's not all, either! I can dive from the highest spot out of all my classmates!

Doug... I want you to promise me something.
What?
Don't ever be a Rocket Man.
Dad?
But I...
I mean it.
You don't know what it's like.
Because when you're out there, you want to be here,
And when you're here, you want to be out there.
Don't start that. Don't let it get hold of you.
But...
I've always wanted to be a Rocket Man for the longest time, dad...
Every-time I'm out there,
You know, I try to stay here. Last Saturday when I got home I started trying so god damned hard to stay here.
I think if I ever get back to Earth, I'll stay there. I'll never go out again. But I go out, and I guess I'll always go out.

.....
Promise me you won't be like me.
But even so, I knew where he'd be tonight. Looking at the jewelry in Orion from our front porch.
I knew that he did all this to convince himself that the sea, the towns, the land, and his family were the only neat and good things...
After he'd leave, Mother and I would go back to not talking about him. And on nights when the stars shone brightly, Mother would hardly be able to sleep..
Okay...
Filets de sole Percis!
Cream stew!
Mushrooms in a white wine sauce!
Well, you won't be here for Thanksgiving...
Look at this turkey!
What's this feast in the middle of August?


Mom's homecooking must've done it!
Lily, I...
He must've made up his mind!
Lily...
Ah...
Yes?
Go on, dad! Say it quick! Say you'll stay home this time, for good, and never go away! Say it!
Don't back out now!
Just then a passing helicopter caused dad to glance out the window, out to the sky where the red planet Mars was rising in the East.
I...

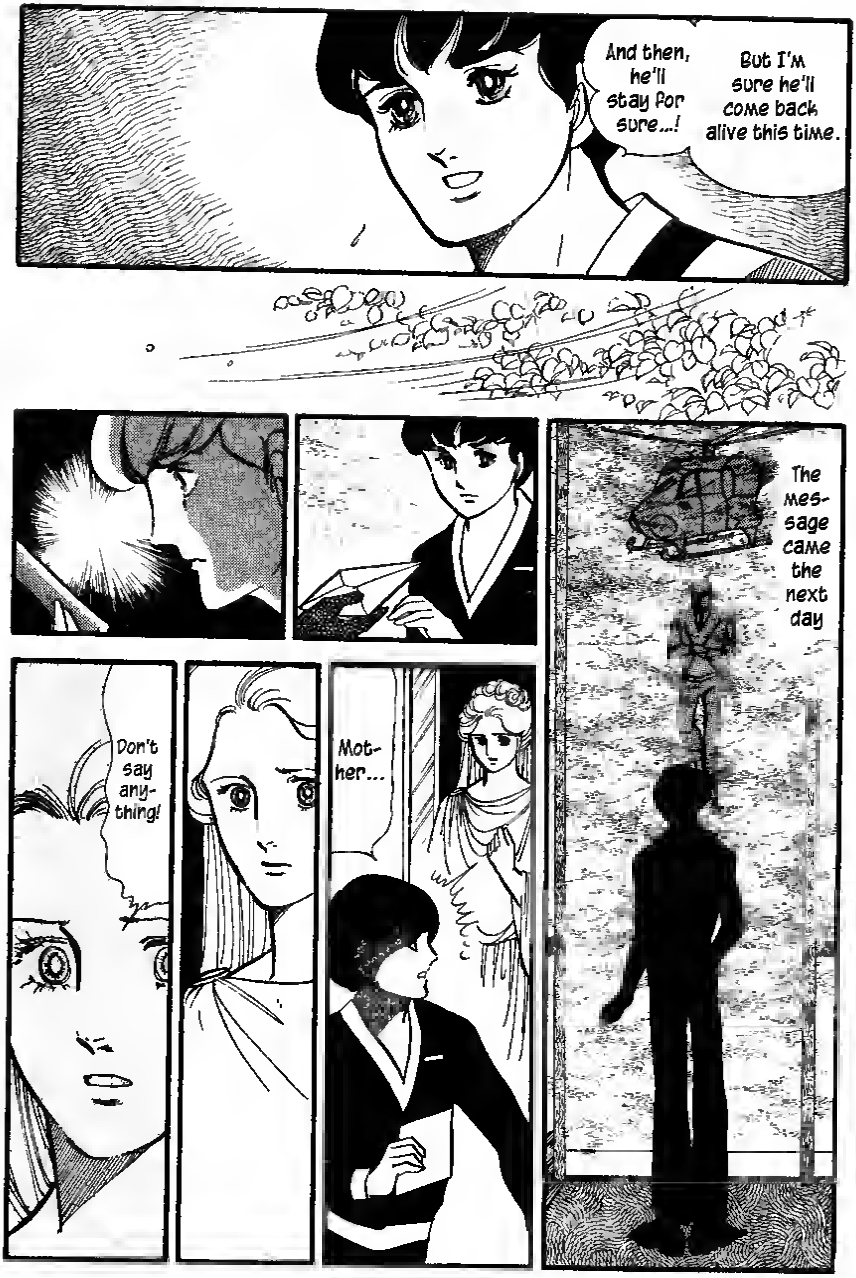
Excuse me I'll get the bread
Thank you for this lovely meal. Now let's eat...
Mother...
I would not sleep that night
Hey, dad...
.....
Neither would dad.

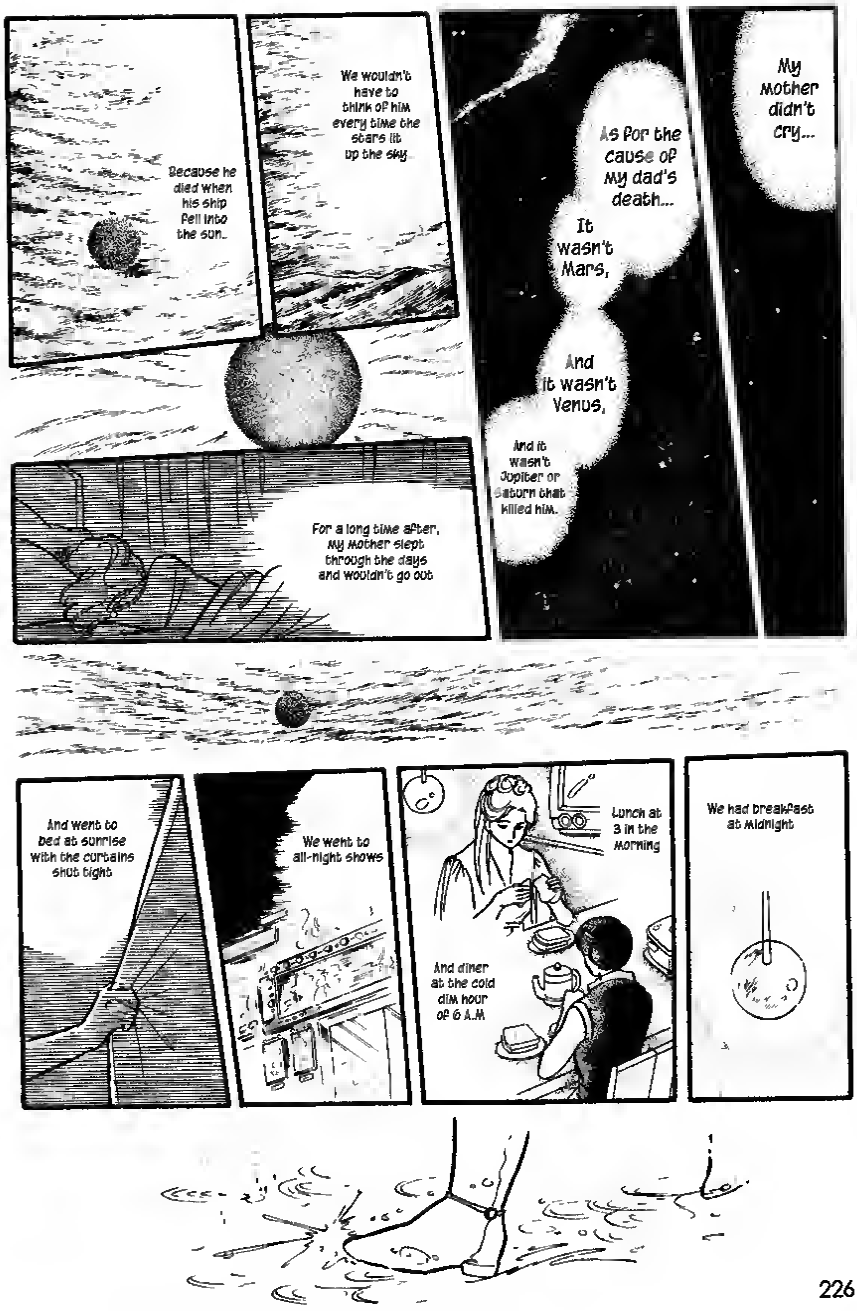
How many ways are there to die in space...?
A million.
The heat, the cold, the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the asteroids, the planetoids, the radiation...
Or comets take you with them.
The meteors hit you, the air goes out of your rocket,
Concussion. Strangulation. Explosion.
Centrifugal force. Too much acceleration. Too little.
And do they bury you?
They usually never find you.
You fly off a billion miles away.
You become a meteor traveling forever through space.
Traveling graves they call 'em
Out in space,
Death comes quick
You don't linger or even know it.
You're dead and that's it.
One more thing...

Sure thing. See you in about 3 months.
Dad!
You mean it?!
I've decided...
You're leaving already?
Next time I come home, I'm home to stay.
Tell your mother that when she gets up.
Doug...
Mother will be so happy to hear it!
When your father left for space,
10 years ago...
I said to myself this...
Mother? Dad said that... sometimes you don't act as if you hear or see him... Why's that?
She won't ever look at him as just a shadow or reflection anymore.

He's dead... Or as good as dead.
So think of him dead.
And when he comes back, 3 or 4 times a year,
It's not him at all
It's only a pleasant little memory or a dream.
But other times, you...
And if a memory stops or a dream stops, it can't hurt half as much. So most of the time I think of him dead.
But he said he'd settle down the next time he comes back. !
No...
It's better to think he hasn't been here for 10 years and I'll never see him again. It doesn't hurt as much.
No,
Other times I can't help myself.
I bake pies and treat him as if he were alive,
And then it hurts.

Then we'll never be able to see Venus again.
10 years ago I thought, "What if he dies on Venus..?"
He's dead, I'm very sure of that...
What if he dies on Mars?
We'll never be able to look at Mars again, all red in the sky,
Or what if he died on Jupiter or Saturn or Neptune?
On those nights when those planets were high in the sky,
We wouldn't want to have anything to do with the stars...
Without wanting to go in and lock the door.
I...
I Guess not...


And then, he'll stay for sure...!
But I'm sure he'll come back alive this time.
The message came the next day
Don't say anything!
Mother...


Because he died when his ship fell into the sun.
We wouldn't have to think of him every time the stars lit up the sky.
For a long time after, my mother slept through the days and wouldn't go out
My mother didn't cry...
As for the cause of my dad's death...
It wasn't Mars,
And it wasn't Venus,
And it wasn't Jupiter or Saturn that killed him.
And went to bed at sunrise with the curtains shut tight
We went to all-night shows
Lunch at 3 in the morning
And dinner at the cold dim hour of 6 A.M
We had breakfast at midnight

And, for a long while, the only times we ever went out to walk during daytime,

Was when it rained and there was no sun.

# 解説『ウは宇宙船のウ』

評論家　中島　梓

レイ・ブラッドベリは私が最初に好きになったSF作家であり、いまでもいちばん好きな作家のひとりである。

『十月はたそがれの国』にはまったくいかれてしまった。『火星年代記』はいうまでもない。ブラッドベリの書いた、すばらしい、美しい、ふしぎな寂しさと静けさを湛えたたくさんの短編の中でも、ことに好きでたまらなかったものをあげると、『みずうみ』、『万華鏡』、『ロケット・マン』、『サルサの匂い』、『大鎌』、『世にも稀なる趣向の奇蹟』、『草原』、『ロケット』、『壜』、『小さな殺人者』、『風』、『ある老母の話』、『かくてリアブチンスカは死せり』――きりがない。『霧笛』も好きだし、『集会』や『四月の魔女』の系列のものも好きだった。

ことに夢中になったのは、しかし、『みずうみ』と『ロケット・マン』（私の読んだハヤカワの本では吉田誠一さんがそう訳していた。いまでも、萩尾望都さんが『宇宙船乗組員』にふられた、『スペースマン』という、よりモダンなことばでなく、『ロケット・マン』という、古風でゆたかなイメージのほうが、私にはぴったり来る感じがある）だった。恥をしのん

で白状してしまうと私は中学・高校時代にはせっせとマンガをかいては投稿していたが、怖いもの知らずにも、すっかりいかれていた『みずうみ』と『ロケット・マン』の二つを、何とかマンガ化しようとこころみたことさえもあるのである。この恐ろしいくわだては、私の救い難い絵音痴のために中絶したが、しかしそれが挫折してまことによかった。もし、うかうかと、何とかマンガ家の端くれにでもなっていたとしたら、私は結局、何とかしてブラッドベリのその美しい寂しい世界をマンガにしよう、という野心を捨てられずに持ちつづけ、その結果として、萩尾さんのこの「ブラッドベリ傑作劇場」を読んで愕然とし打ちのめされ再起不能、という有様になるのは確実だったからである。

しかも萩尾さんの選択には、私があれほど「これはどうしてもマンガにしなければ」と思いつづけていた『みずうみ』も『ロケット・マン』も、『霧笛』まで、すべて入っているのだ。有難いことに私はマンガ家になりそこねた。そのおかげで、私は、萩尾さんの選択にショックをうけるかわりに、「ああ、モーさまも同じ作品を好きなのだ」と、ひとりで悦にいってニタニタしていられる。

それに、ブラッドベリをマンガ化するのが萩尾さんだということ、萩尾

さんが選んだのがほかならぬブラッドベリであったということ、これは、まことによいことである。おかげで私たちは、私のとんでもない絵でも、他の誰かれの絵でもなく、ブラッドベリをやるならなるほど彼女しかいなかっただろうという、萩尾さんの美しい絵で、マンガ化されたブラッドベリの世界にひたりきることができる。

萩尾さんの絵は、しだいに何か、すきとおって、言うならば無機的な静けさ、といったものを湛えるようになってきた。それはあるいは、マンガ、という動的なもののためには少し考えてしまうことかもしれないが、しかし、その静けさと清澄さは、ブラッドベリのもっている寂しいたそがれの世界とほとんど同じ性質のものであり、たぶんその絵なしには、誰も『みずうみ』の、あの夏のさいごの悲しさや、『ロケット・マン』の透明な悲哀を再現することはできなかった。

考えてみると、私の好きな『ポーの一族』の『グレンスミスの日記』や『メリーベルと銀のバラ』、『シャーロック・ホームズの帽子』なども、ブラッドベリの世界と共通する、秋の寂しさ、たそがれの透明さをはじめから色濃く持っていたようだ。その意味では、この短編集は、モーさま故郷へ帰る、とでも言い得る、そんな企画だったのかもしれない。

# ウは宇宙船のウ

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